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ABSTRACT

This report provides information on the characteristics and work patterns of United States agricultural workers performing seasonal agricultural services (SAS) during fiscal year 1990. SAS crops include the majority of nursery products, cash grains, field crops, and all fruits and vegetables. More than 2,000 personal interviews with SAS workers were conducted by the National Agricultural Workers Survey (NASW). Data on personal characteristics of seasonal agricultural workers include: (1) age; (2) gender; (3) marital status; (4) national origin and ethnicity; (5) the effect of the Immigration Reform and Control Act 1986 (IRCA) on legal status; (6) literacy, schooling, and English skills; (7) family residence and work-site household composition; and (8) income, assets, and use of government programs. Information on employment patterns and job characteristics include employment history and labor supply, characteristics and patterns of SAS employment, characteristics and patterns of non-SAS employment, and characteristics and patterns of nonwork periods and periods spent abroad. Regional differences in worker characteristics, job characteristics, and employment patterns are outlined. The appendix describes statistical procedures used. This report contains 41 figures, 3 tables, and 3 maps. (LP)

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Findings From the National Agricultural Workers Survey (NAWS) 1990

A Demographic and Employment Profile of Perishable Crop Farm Workers

Office of Program Economics
Research Report No. 1

U.S. Department of Labor
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Policy

July 1991

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Findings From the National Agricultural Workers Survey (NAWS) 1990

A Demographic and Employment Profile of Perishable Crop Farm Workers

Office of Program Economics
Research Report No. 1

U.S. Department of Labor
Lynn Martin, Secretary

Office of the Assistant Secretary for Policy
Debra R. Bowland, Acting Assistant Secretary
July 1991

Prepared by Aguirre International, San Mateo, California, under the supervision of the Office of Program Economics.

This report was researched and written by Richard Mines, Susan Gabbard, and Beatriz Boccalandro.

The authors acknowledge the invaluable contributions of the office, field staff and management of Aguirre International to the success of this project. The survey was conducted under contract no. J-9-M-8-0040.

The views expressed herein are the authors and do not necessarily reflect the official position of the U.S. Department of Labor.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

BACKGROUND

This report provides information on the characteristics and work patterns of U.S. agricultural workers performing Seasonal Agricultural Services (SAS) during fiscal year 1990 (October 1, 1989 - September 31, 1990). The information presented was gathered during more than 2,000 personal interviews with SAS workers conducted by the National Agricultural Workers Survey (NAWS) during fiscal year 1990.

As part of the Immigration Reform and Control Act (IRCA) of 1986, the Secretaries of Agriculture and Labor are charged annually with determining if there is a shortage of SAS workers. To respond to this legislative requirement, the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) contracted Aguirre International to conduct the National Agricultural Workers Survey (NAWS). The NAWS collects comprehensive job history information on SAS workers to estimate fluctuations in the labor supply. Only farm workers employed in SAS labor are interviewed for the NAWS.

In fiscal year 1990, 2,115 randomly selected SAS workers were interviewed. To ensure regional coverage, the NAWS uses site area sampling to obtain a nationally representative cross section of SAS workers. To ensure seasonal sensitivity, three six to ten week cycles are conducted. One cycle begins in January, one in May, and one in September. Site selection and interview allocations are proportional to seasonal payroll size.

Employer names are obtained from various government sources and a random sample of SAS employers is generated for each of the selected sites. NAWS Regional Coordinators contact selected employers to obtain access to the work site. Interviewers visit the work

site and ask a random sample of workers to participate. Interviews in five languages take place at the worker's home or at worker selected locations.

The report is divided into three sections. Section I covers characteristics of SAS workers; Section II reviews SAS workers' patterns of employment and Section III presents some regional differences among SAS workers and SAS work. The major findings for each section are summarized below.

CHARACTERISTICS OF SAS WORKERS

- The SAS labor force is comprised mainly of young workers, Hispanics and immigrants.

- The impact of employer sanctions has been mixed. Most SAS workers have work authorization, but a significant minority are unauthorized. One out of every five foreign-born workers continues to be unauthorized. One half of the foreign-born SAS workers applied for legalization through IRCA programs. More than one-fourth of the unauthorized SAS workers have signed up for the RAW (Replinishment Agricultural Workers) program.

- Most SAS workers have low levels of education and do not speak or read English. More than one-half of SAS workers have completed eight or fewer years of formal education. Spanish is the primary language for two out of three SAS workers. Only two in five workers say that they can speak or read English well. More than one-third of SAS workers have tried to improve their skills by taking an adult education class. English is the most popular type of class.

- The majority of SAS workers are married and/or have children. Two in five SAS workers live away from their families while performing SAS work. Men and foreign-born workers are most likely to be living away from their families.

- One-half of SAS worker families have incomes below the poverty level despite the prevalence of families with two wage earners. SAS workers work, on average, 34 weeks per year.

- Despite their poverty, only one-fifth of SAS workers are recipients of needs-based social services. Food Stamps is the type of assistance most often received.

PATTERNS OF EMPLOYMENT

- SAS workers average about one-half of the year doing SAS work. Most SAS workers would be willing to do more farm work, but most are not willing to migrate in search of additional SAS work.

- Almost three-fourths of SAS workers plan to continue doing farm work indefinitely unless they become physically unable to work. Among those intending to leave farm work, the most common reason given is dissatisfaction with the terms of employment. The job factors considered most important in sustaining a SAS worker's willingness to engage in farm work are wages, employer relations and benefits.

- Three fourths of SAS workers work in fruits, nuts or vegetables. Almost one-half of SAS workers are engaged in harvesting. Over three-fourths are employed directly by the producer. Farm labor contractors employ most of the rest.

- SAS workers report that most SAS jobs pay relatively low wages and have relatively few benefits. Substandard working conditions continue to prevail in some sectors of farm work. SAS workers are paid mostly by the hour and have a median hourly wage of $4.85. Fewer than one-half of SAS workers report that they are covered by Unemployment Insurance, and fewer than one-fourth have health insurance. About one-fourth of SAS workers still lack access to basic sanitary facilities at the work site.

- About one in three SAS workers holds a non-SAS job at some point in time during a one-year period. More than one-half of those with non-SAS jobs perform non-SAS labor for fewer than four months out of the year. SAS workers receive a median hourly wage of $4.50 for their non-SAS work. Most non-SAS work is in the areas of other agriculture, services, construction, mechanical trades, food service and manufacturing.

- Many SAS workers who perform non-farm labor prefer it to farm labor. SAS workers who have personal contacts in the non-farm sector and/or a history of non-farm labor are more confident in their ability to get a non-farm job.

- The majority of SAS workers spend some time not working in the United States. Slightly less than one-half of SAS workers spend part of the year abroad.

- The majority of SAS workers who reside in the United States while not working do not receive Unemployment Insurance benefits. In about three-fourths of the cases, lack of work is caused by lay offs.

REGIONAL DIFFERENCES

- The number of women relative to men performing SAS work is lower in the Southeast than in the rest of the country.

- Foreign-born SAS workers make up most of the SAS labor force in all regions except the Midwest and the Northeast.

- The Southeast has the highest proportion of unauthorized workers.

- The Northeast and the Southeast have the highest proportion of workers who do not have their families at the work site.

- The Southeast has the highest proportion of poor SAS workers.

- Field crop SAS jobs are most predominant in the Midwest and in the Western Plains, while SAS jobs in fruits and nuts are most common in the Northwest, the Southwest, and the Northeast. Vegetable SAS jobs are most predominant in the Southeast.

- The Southeast has the highest concentrations of hand-harvesting SAS jobs and the lowest frequency of semi-skilled SAS jobs.

- On average, SAS workers in the Southwest and Southeast spend less time in non-SAS work than those in the rest of the country; SAS workers from the Midwest and the Western Plains spend less time per year abroad than those in other regions; and Southeastern SAS workers spend less time not working while in the United States than those in other regions.

- The highest concentration of SAS workers employed by farm labor contractors is in the Southeast.

- According to worker respondents, SAS employers in the Southeast rarely offer workers' compensation or Unemployment Insurance.

INTRODUCTION

PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

The *Findings from the National Agricultural Workers Survey* is a new publication series intended to provide the public with information on the characteristics and work patterns of seasonal agricultural workers. Its aim is to provide a basic reference for individuals needing current national statistics on seasonal farm workers. It is hoped that this report will be useful to policy makers, researchers, agricultural employers, employer organizations, and groups providing services to seasonal farm workers.

The report provides an overview of the data collected by the National Agricultural Workers Survey (NAWS). It includes responses of 2,115 SAS workers interviewed by the NAWS during fiscal year 1990. The text and tables in this report depict the frequencies with which these SAS workers selected specific responses to interview questions. For example, the report details what percentage of the individuals were married, what percentage were single and what percentage were divorced, separated or widowed. In some policy areas, data have been broken down further by important subgroups of the population. For example, English language proficiency is reported by country of origin. All analysis in this report conforms to statistical conventions (see Appendix). More in depth analysis of the NAWS data will be presented through occasional reports on specific topics.

These findings display information for individual respondents in the NAWS regardless of how much SAS work they perform. If we were to report our results in terms of hours worked rather in terms of percent of individuals, certain groups would become more important contributors to the SAS labor force. Some important demographic groups slighted by this approach are men, participants in IRCA's Special Agricultural Workers

(SAW) authorization program, and immigrants from Latin America. Each of these groups works proportionately more hours than the percent of the labor force they represent.

A similar report will be produced annually, contingent on continued funding for the NAWS. This report covers interviews from fiscal year 1990, the second year of the NAWS. The volume covering fiscal year 1989 interviews is forthcoming. The 1990 report is being published before the 1989 report in order to make the most recent information available as soon as possible.

Interested individuals are invited to make comments and suggestions for improving the report. Communication should be directed to Rick Mines, U.S. Department of Labor, Room S-2114, 200 Constitution Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20210.

TOPICS COVERED IN THIS REPORT

The report is divided into three sections. Section I provides national level information on the personal characteristics of seasonal agricultural workers. It covers legal status, schooling, language proficiency and literacy, family residence and U.S. household composition, and income and use of government programs.

Section II provides information on employment patterns and job characteristics at the national level. It covers employment history and labor supply, characteristics and patterns of SAS employment, characteristics and patterns of non-SAS employment, and characteristics and patterns of non-work periods and periods spent abroad.

Section III provides information on regional differences in worker characteristics, job characteristics and employment patterns.

THE SURVEY

The NAWS is a national survey of perishable crop field workers that has been commissioned by the Department of Labor (DOL) in response to the Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986 (IRCA). IRCA requires the Secretaries of Agriculture and Labor to determine annually if there is a shortage of seasonal agricultural service (SAS) workers. The Secretaries also must identify how seasonal agricultural wages and working conditions have changed since the passage of IRCA.

To respond to DOL's legislative needs, the NAWS collects a variety of data from SAS workers. Data from an extensive work history are used to measure changes in SAS labor supplied by employed SAS workers. The NAWS also collects basic demographic information, as well as information on legal status, education, family size and household composition. To monitor wages and working conditions, the NAWS asks workers a series of questions on their current SAS job. In addition, the NAWS asks workers about non-SAS work, non-work periods and time spent abroad.

Although the NAWS interviews only workers currently performing seasonal agricultural services, it should be remembered that the USDA has defined SAS quite broadly. SAS crops include the vast majority of nursery products, cash grains, and field crops, in addition to all fruits and vegetables. SAS work does not include livestock or poultry production, nor does it include work in silage or other crop activities dedicated exclusively to producing animal fodder. The NAWS surveys all field workers involved in SAS crops even though they may work for the same employer year round. The definition of field work, of course, excludes secretaries and mechanics who work for SAS employers. However, field packers, supervisors and all other field workers are included.

The NAWS does not sample unemployed agricultural workers. Workers can only be interviewed for the NAWS when they are actively employed in SAS work.

METHODOLOGY

Each year, the NAWS conducts personal interviews with over 2,000 randomly selected U.S. SAS workers. The sample is designed to be sensitive to seasonal and regional fluctuations in the amount of SAS work performed. The NAWS uses site area sampling to obtain a nationally representative sample of SAS workers while at the same time containing travel costs. A sample of seventy-two counties covering twenty-five states was selected (see map 1). The seventy-two counties were chosen to represent twelve distinct agricultural regions (see map 2). No fewer than four counties are selected for each region.

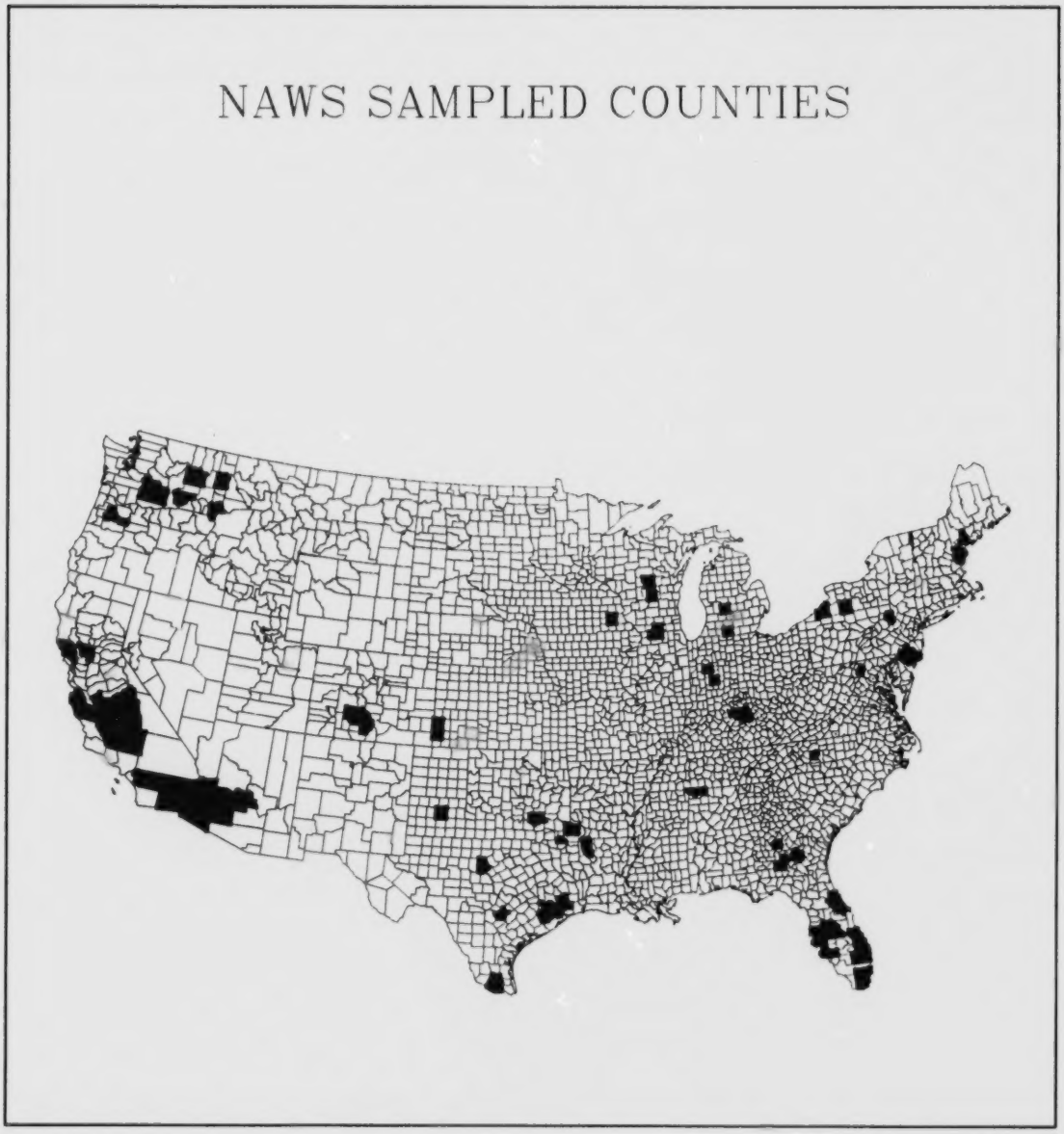
To ensure that data collection is sensitive to seasonal fluctuations in the agricultural work force, interviewing cycles lasting six to ten weeks are conducted three times a year: one cycle begins in January, one begins in May and one begins in September. The number of interviews conducted during a cycle is proportionate to the amount of SAS activity conducted at that time of the year.

Multi-stage sampling is used to select SAS workers for each cycle. For each four- month cycle, approximately thirty of the seventy-two counties are selected randomly as interviewing sites. Site selection is sensitive to the size of the seasonal agricultural payroll. A random sample of SAS employers is generated for each of the selected county sites. Employer names are obtained from the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the Agricultural Soil and Conservation Service, Farm Labor Contractor Registration lists and other sources.

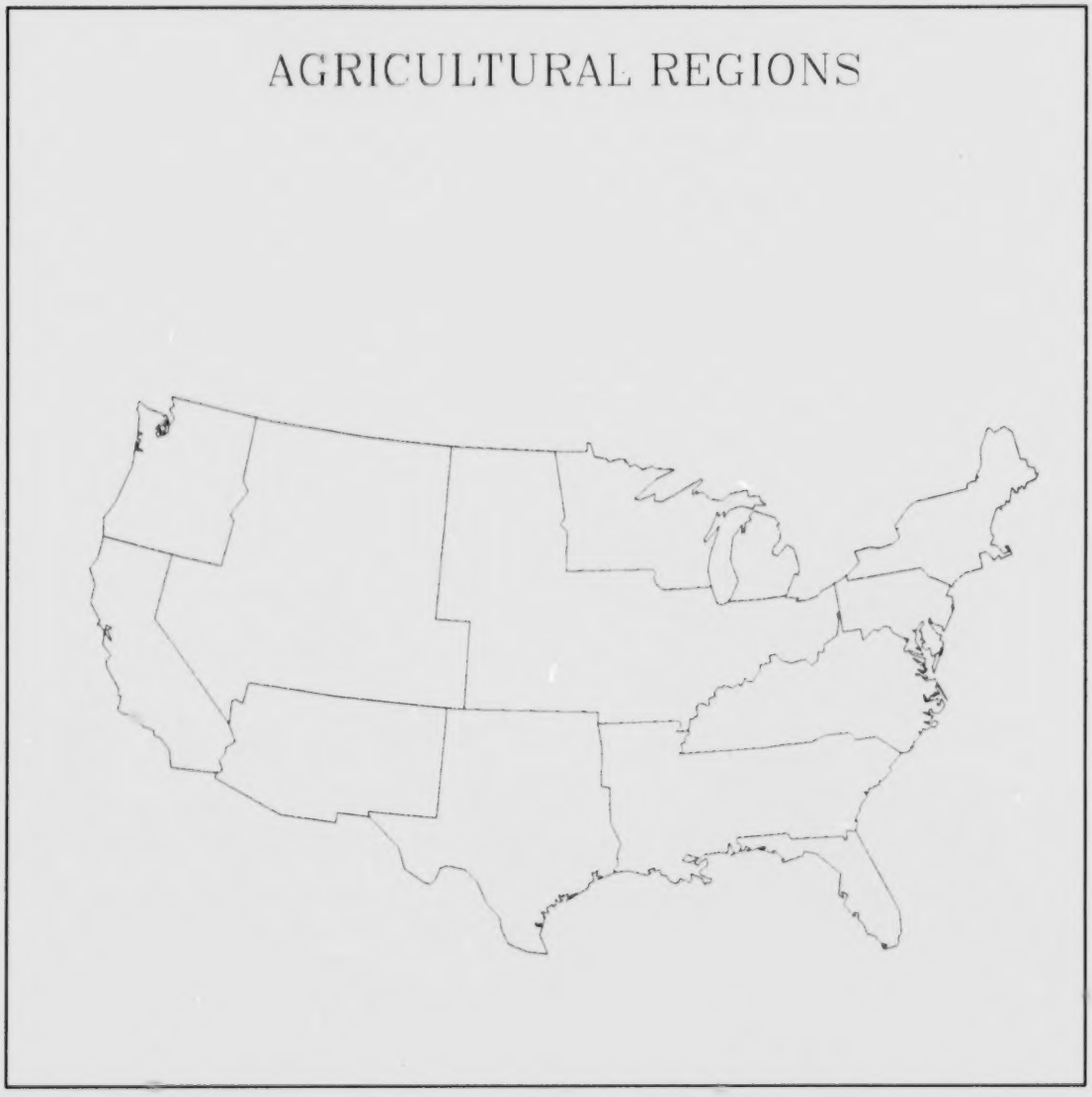
NAWS Regional Coordinators contact the selected employers, explain the purpose of the survey and obtain access to the work site in order to schedule interviews. Interviewers then go to the farm, ranch or nursery, explain the purpose of the survey to the workers, and ask a random sample of them to participate. Interviews then are conducted in the SAS worker's home or at another location of the SAS worker's choice.

This report includes data from 2,115 personal interviews which were conducted by the NAWS between October 1, 1989 to October 1, 1990.

MAP 1



MAP 2



SECTION I: CHARACTERISTICS OF SAS WORKERS

CHAPTER 1
DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE

INTRODUCTION

This chapter reports basic demographic characteristics of SAS workers. It covers age, gender and marital status as well as national origin and ethnicity.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

Most SAS workers are:

- Young (65%). Almost two-thirds of SAS workers are under thirty-five years of age.
- Male (71%). Over two-thirds of SAS workers are men.
- Married (64%). Almost two-thirds of SAS workers are married.
- Foreign-born (62%). Almost two-thirds of SAS workers are foreign-born. The majority (51%) of workers have been in the United States longer than eight years.
- Hispanic (71%). Over two-thirds of SAS workers are of Hispanic origin.

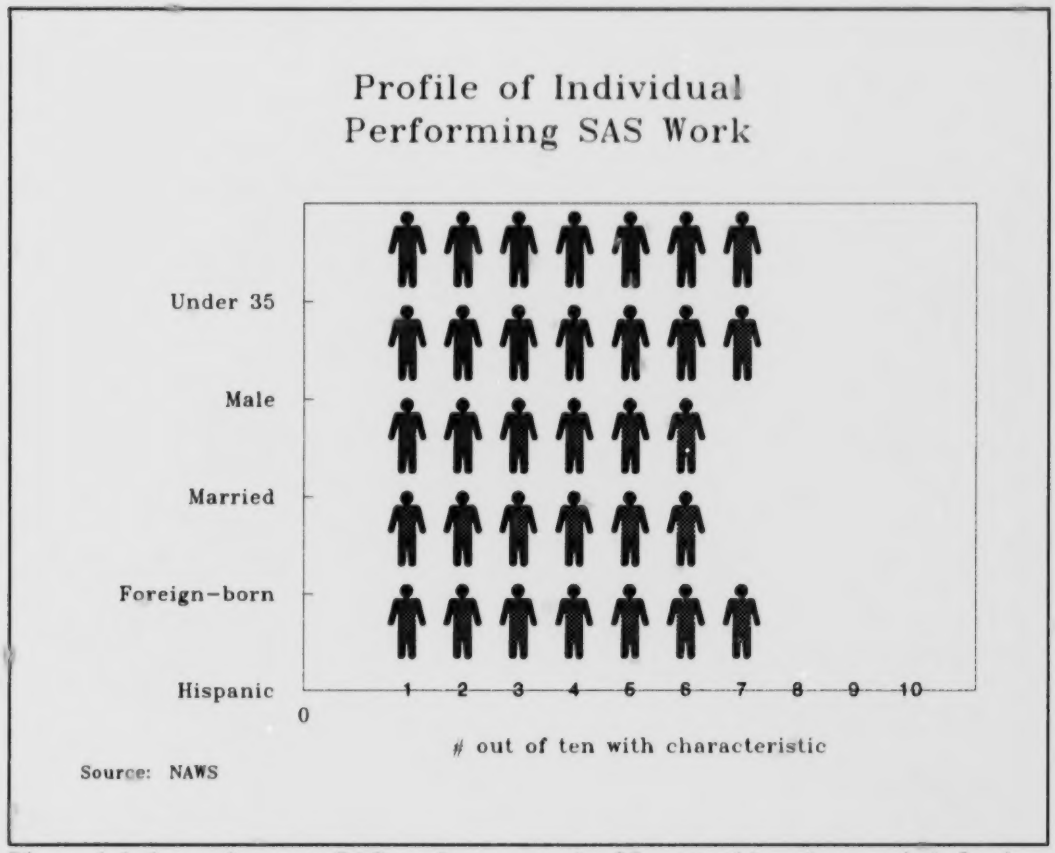


Figure 1.1 shows that most SAS workers are under 35 years old, male, married, foreign-born and Hispanic.

AGE AND GENDER

Most SAS workers are young. The median age is thirty-one years. Very few SAS workers are under the age of eighteen (4%). Most (61%) SAS workers are between the ages of eighteen and thirty-four years. Another 19% percent of SAS workers are between thirty-five and forty-four years, and only 16% are over the age of forty-four.

Age varies by ethnic origin. U.S.-born African-Americans, whose median age is forty, tend to be older than other SAS workers. Similarly, Asians have a median age of forty-three years. Non-Mexican-born Latin Americans, on the other hand, are the youngest

SAS workers, with a median age of twenty-four years. The median ages of U.S.-born whites (31), U.S.-born Hispanics (35), and Mexicans (31), are similar to the median age of the entire population (31).

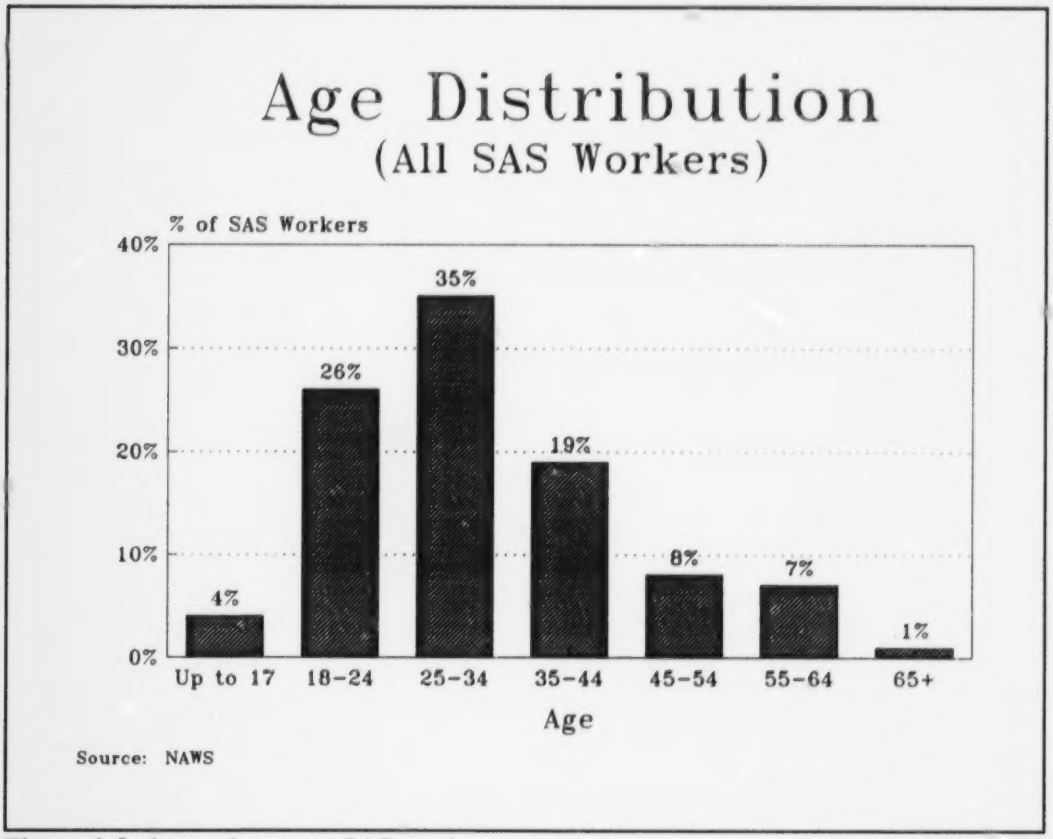


Figure 1.2 shows that most SAS workers are young.

Most seasonal SAS workers are men (71%).

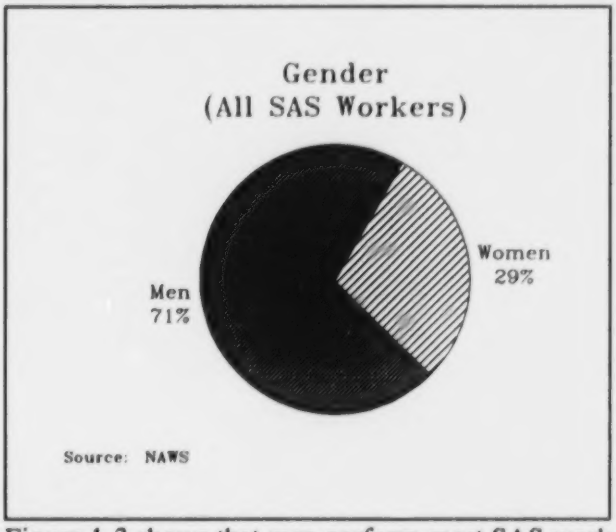


Figure 1.3 shows that men perform most SAS work

MARITAL STATUS

Almost two out of three (64%) SAS workers are married.[1] Seven percent of SAS workers are separated, divorced or widowed and 29% have never been married, amounting to a total of 36% who are single. Women are somewhat more likely to be married than men (71% vs. 60%).

[1] For the purposes of the NAWS, the term married includes both common-law and legal marriages.

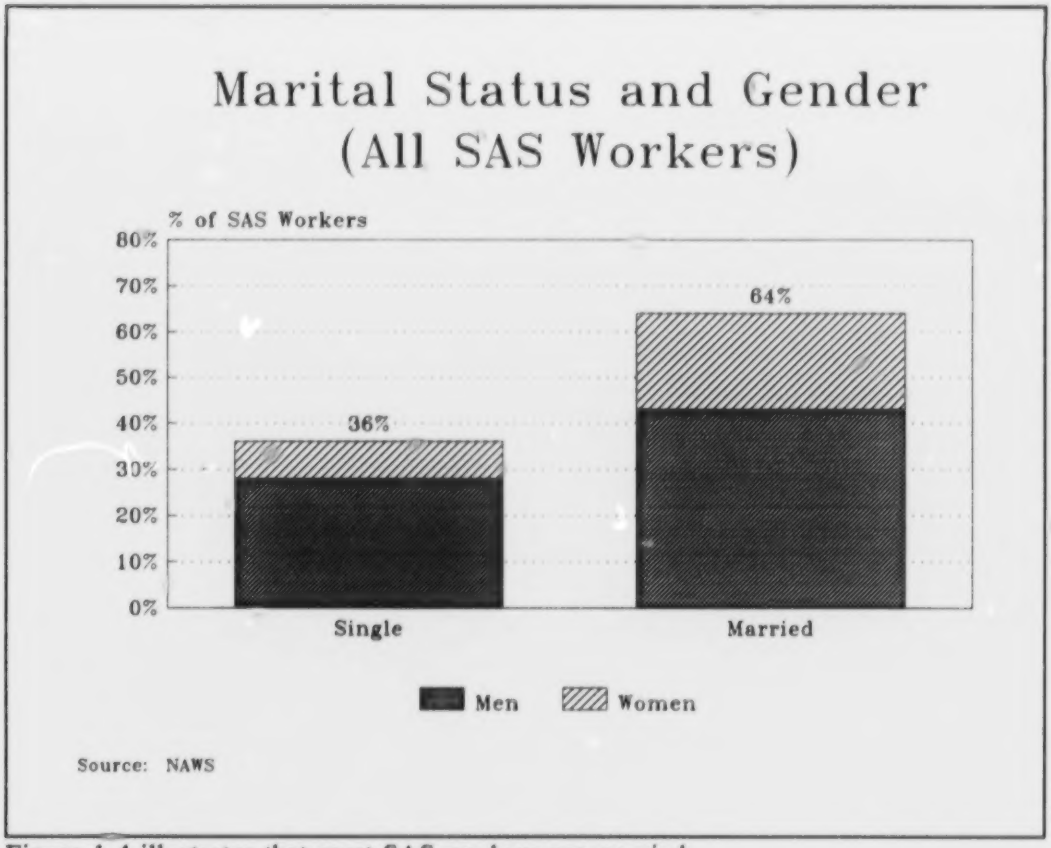


Figure 1.4 illustrates that most SAS workers are married.

ETHNICITY AND PLACE OF BIRTH

U.S. seasonal agricultural employers depend heavily on foreign workers; 62% of SAS workers are foreign-born and 38% are U.S.-born. Over half (57%) of SAS workers (or 92% of all foreign-born SAS workers) are Mexican. A small percentage of SAS workers are from other countries in Latin America (2%), Asia (2%), and the non-Spanish speaking Caribbean (1%).

Table 1.1 Ethnicity of SAS Workers

FOREIGN-BORN

ETHNICITY	% OF FOREIGN-BORN	% OF TOTAL
Mexican	92%	57%
Other Latin	4%	2%
Asian	3%	2%
Other Caribbean	1%	1%
Other	0%	0%
TOTAL FOREIGN-BORN	100%	62%

U.S.-BORN

ETHNICITY	% OF U.S.-BORN	% OF TOTAL
Whites (non-Hispanic)	60%	23%
Hispanics	34%	13%
African-Americans (non-Hispanic)	5%	2%
Other	1%	0%
TOTAL U.S.-BORN	100%	38%

TOTAL	100%	100%

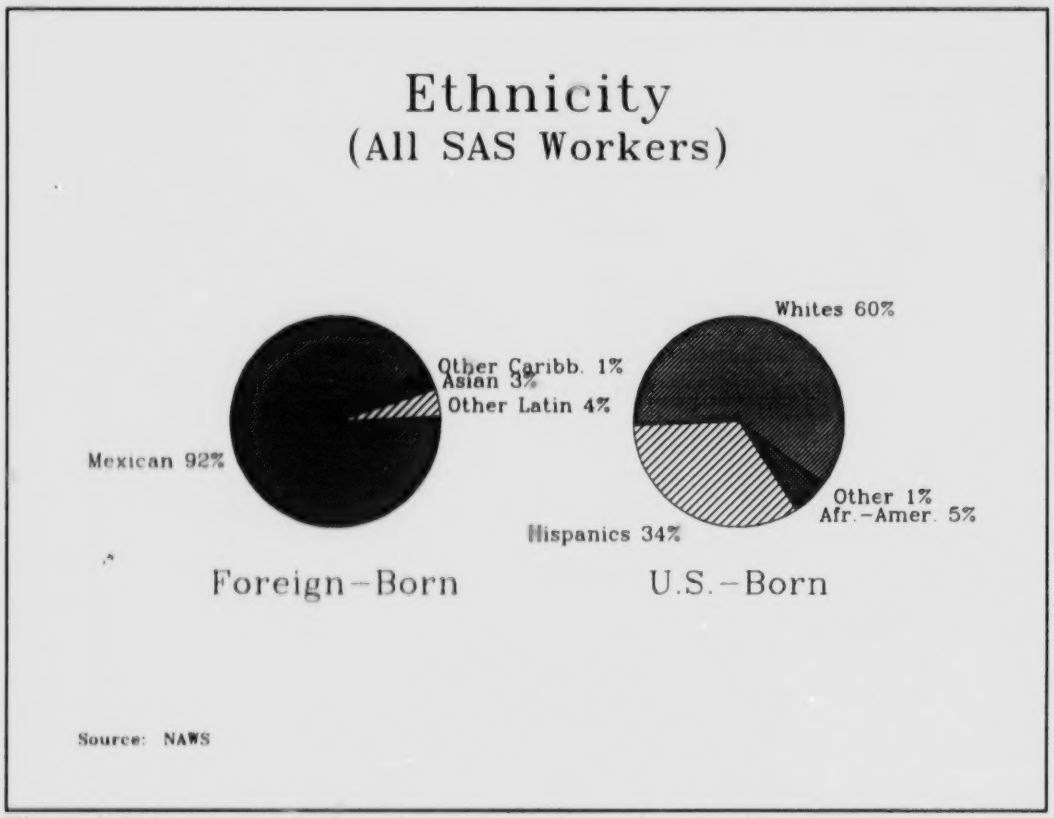


Figure 1.5 shows most SAS workers are members of a minority group.

Using ethnicity labels is highly sensitive. It involves making somewhat arbitrary divisions in a multi-dimensional continuum of identification which is based on cultural heritage, nationality and racial background. As shall be shown, self-identification, societal identification and the sociologist's identification of ethnicity can vary. In this report, we describe major national, cultural, and linguistic differences among U.S. SAS workers that are useful in understanding seasonal labor supply.

In asking about ethnicity, originally the NAWS attempted to use standard questions about racial identity and Hispanic origin that would conform to U.S. Census definitions and allow for comparison to other surveys. Based on advice and experience, the NAWS questions were modified slightly. Despite these changes,

many SAS workers still found it difficult to identify themselves using the categories in these questions. This is probably because many SAS workers come from countries where race and ethnicity are defined differently than they are defined in the United States.

The question on Hispanic-origin was modified to include more answers. The questionnaire asks workers to identify themselves as Mexican-American, Mexican, Chicano, Puerto Rican, Other Hispanic or "none of the above.". Once a variety of responses was available, SAS workers had little difficulty answering this question.

The question on racial identity was more difficult. That question asks SAS workers to indicate whether they are white; black; Asian or Pacific Islander; Native American, Alaskan native or Indigenous; or "Other." In examining the answers to this question, it became clear that many SAS workers (almost 40%) do not identify with U.S. racial categories and answered "Other." Almost all workers who rejected the categories listed in the NAWS were Hispanic, many of whom would be classified as white using the usual U.S. racial divisions. This problem of identification with pre-set categories is common in these types of surveys. Those conducting the 1990 U.S. Census report that they have this difficulty.

Where does that leave us in trying to identify the ethnicity of SAS workers?
First, we can say that over three quarters (77%) of SAS workers identify themselves as part of one minority group. Only 23% of SAS workers identify themselves as white and non-Hispanic.

Second, 71% of SAS workers are Hispanic. Fifty-seven percent are Mexicans, 8% are Mexican-Americans, 3% are Puerto Ricans, and 1% are Chicanos. Two percent identified themselves as Other Hispanics.

While workers are clear about their Hispanic origins, analyzing the question on race is less meaningful as almost 40% of SAS workers choose the "Other" category. Thus, they indicate that they do not consider themselves white, African-American, Asian, or Native or Indigenous American. The question on race identification was more useful in identifying U.S.-born SAS workers who are more familiar with the categories.[2]

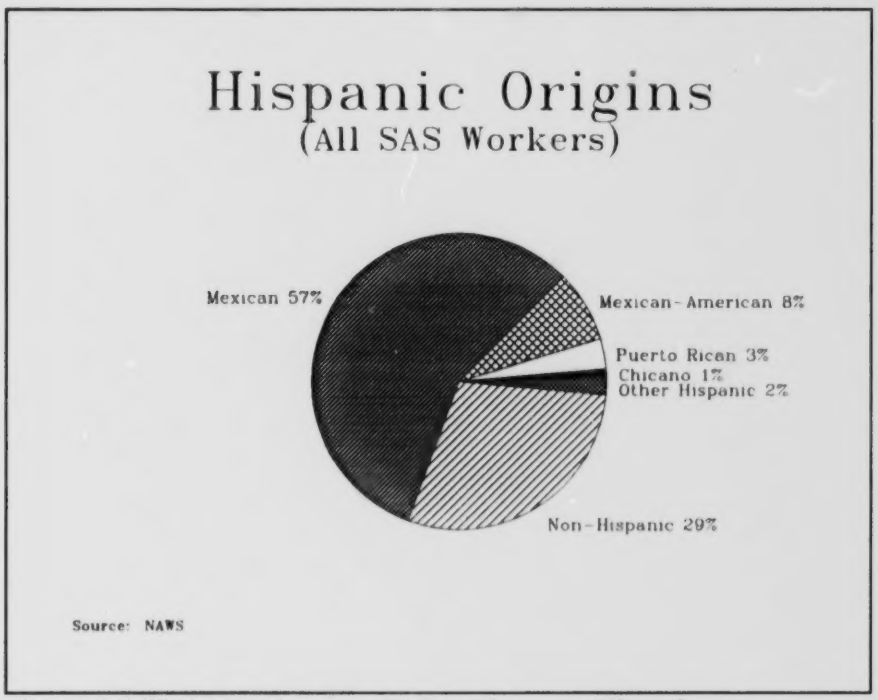


Figure 1.6 illustrates that most SAS workers are Hispanic.

[2]For those who desire information on racial background, the following data are provided. Combining race and Hispanic origin, it appears 68% of SAS workers are Hispanics who identify themselves as either white or "Other," including those who identify themselves as Puerto Rican. Another 24% are white non-Hispanics. Three percent are African-Americans, of whom a small percentage also identified themselves as Hispanic. Asians and Pacific Islanders comprise another 2% of SAS workers, of whom a small number are both Asian/Pacific Islanders and Hispanic (less than 1%). The remaining 3% of SAS workers are Indigenous Mexicans and Central Americans, or Native Americans. Most (51%) members of this category are Indigenous Mexicans and Central Americans who also identify themselves as Hispanic.

Interestingly, among U.S.-born SAS workers, the majority (66%) are non-Hispanic: 60% of U.S.-born SAS workers are non-Hispanic whites, 5% are non-Hispanic blacks, and 1% are Native Americans or Asians. U.S.-born Hispanics make up 34% of the domestic SAS labor force.

NUMBER OF YEARS FOREIGN-BORN WORKERS SPENT IN THE UNITED STATES

Most (55%) foreign-born SAS workers have lived in the United States fewer than ten years. Twenty-eight percent of these workers have been here under five years, 27% between five and nine years, 24% between ten and fourteen years, 10% between fifteen and nineteen years, and 11% twenty years or longer.

The number of years in the United States for foreign-born workers varies across ethnic groups. Mexicans have, on average, been in the United States the longest (ten years). Asians have been in the United States, on average, seven years. Central and South Americans, and those from the Caribbean, have an average of five years in the United States.

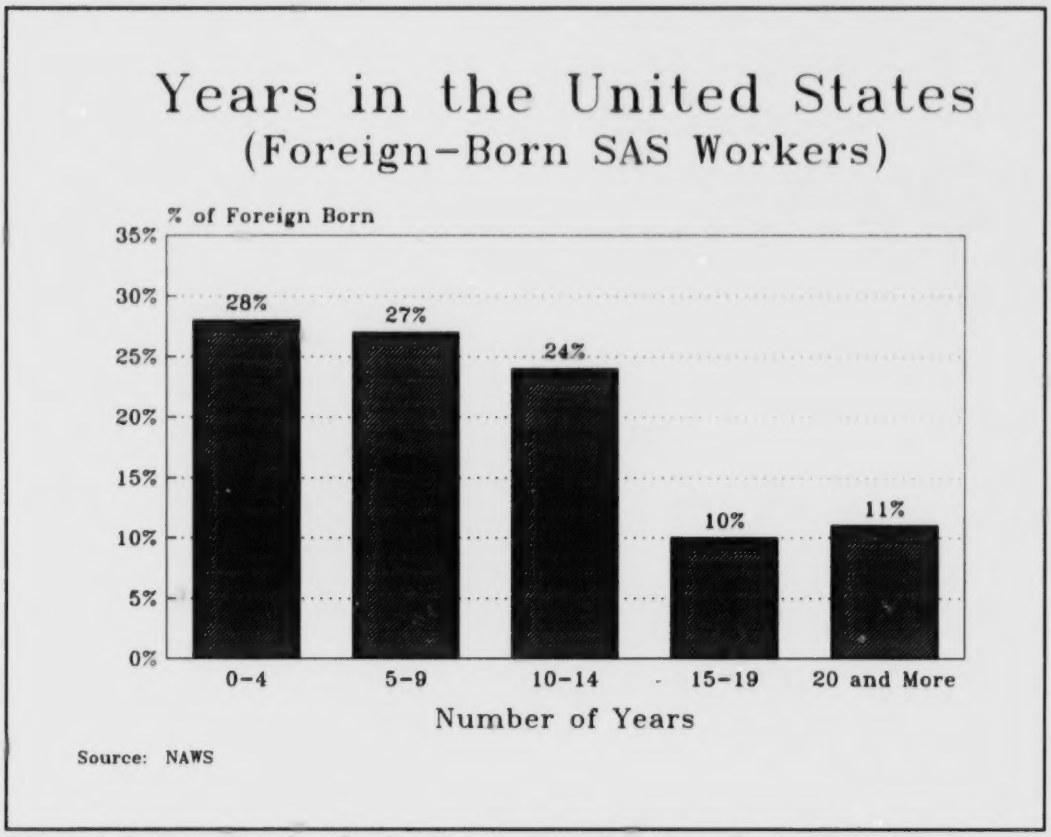


Figure 1.7 shows that few foreign born workers have been in the United States more than fourteen years.

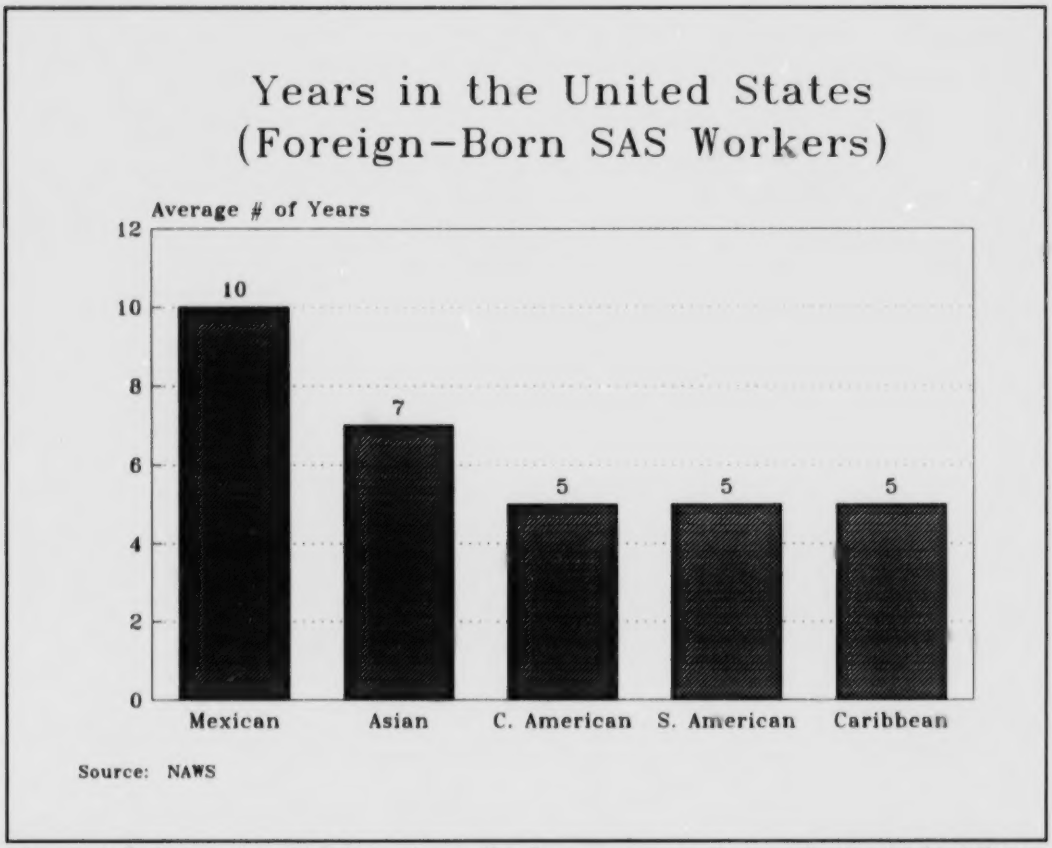


Figure 1.8 shows that Mexicans have lived, on average, longer in the United States than other ethnic groups.

CHAPTER 2
LEGAL STATUS

INTRODUCTION

This chapter discusses some impacts of IRCA on farm laborers. It begins with a brief introduction to IRCA and some background on legal status terminology. It then covers compliance with employer sanctions, the legal status of foreign-born workers, the impact of legalization programs, and the various groups who applied for the Replenishment Agricultural Worker (RAW) programs.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

- Impact of the legalization program and of employer sanctions has been mixed.
  - Twelve percent of SAS workers, amounting to one in five (19%) foreign-born workers, are unauthorized.
  - Three out of ten (29%) SAS workers are SAW program applicants.
- Over half (53%) of foreign-born SAS workers have applied for legalization through IRCA programs.
- More than one-fourth (28%) of unauthorized SAS workers have signed up for the RAW program.

BACKGROUND ON IRCA AND LEGAL STATUS TERMINOLOGY

In its attempt to control the employment of unauthorized foreign workers, the Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986 (IRCA) brought changes to employer-employee relationships in agriculture. The act requires employers, including agricultural employers, to verify employee work authorization. Those who knowingly hire unauthorized workers face the threat of legal sanctions, including heavy fines and jail sentences.

To ease the impact of employer sanctions on both workers and employers, IRCA included several legalization programs. These programs allowed qualifying undocumented individuals to become United States temporary residents, and ultimately, legal permanent residents. The IRCA programs are described later in this chapter.

Before examining the impact of IRCA on the agricultural labor force, it is necessary to define the different types of legal statuses. The Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) issues a variety of visas to foreign nationals, not all of which confer work authorization. Authorized workers include all U.S. citizens, as well as all foreign nationals who have been granted work authorization by the INS. For purposes of this analysis, authorized workers are broken down into four categories. The first category consists of all U.S. citizens, either naturalized citizens or citizens by birth. The second category is made up of foreign nationals who have become U.S. legal permanent residents (LPR's). These workers are sometimes referred to as "green card" holders. The third category consists of all workers who have been granted temporary residency through one of IRCA's legalization programs. The final category is a residual category that contains all other work-authorized foreign nationals. This includes workers who have obtained work authorization through pending legalization applications, family unity cases, as well as other foreign nationals who have obtained work authorization as part of an INS proceeding or visa application.

Unauthorized workers include all foreign nationals who have not been granted work authorization by INS. For this analysis, unauthorized workers are broken down further into documented and undocumented workers. Not all documents that permit foreign nationals to enter or remain in the United States allow the possessors to work in the United States. For example, tourist visas and some types of student visas allow individuals to enter the United States legally, but do not authorize the bearer to work in this country. Such individuals are unauthorized but not undocumented. Undocumented individuals have neither valid visas nor work authorization.

IMPACT OF IRCA ON SEASONAL LABOR SUPPLY

The impact of employer sanctions on agriculture has been mixed. The number of unauthorized workers employed in agriculture may have declined, but unauthorized workers still comprise an important component of the seasonal labor supply. Twelve percent of SAS workers, amounting to about two in ten (19%) foreign-born workers, are unauthorized. This means that about one in every five (19%) foreign-born workers is unauthorized. Because of the tendency of unauthorized workers to avoid inclusion in government surveys or to conceal the fact that they are unauthorized, these numbers should be considered as minimums.

IRCA legalization programs have been successful in cushioning the impact of employer sanctions by expanding the supply of authorized SAS workers. Almost one-third (32%) of SAS workers are IRCA authorized.

LEGAL STATUS OF SAS LABOR SUPPLY

Eighty-eight percent of SAS workers are authorized to work in the United States. This includes 40% who are citizens, 15% who are legal permanent residents (LPR's), 23% who are temporary residents, and 10% who hold other work-authorized visas.

Despite employer sanctions, 12% of SAS workers are unauthorized. Most (95%) of these unauthorized workers also are undocumented. In other words, fewer than 1% (5% of 12%) of all SAS workers were legally admitted to the United States but are working without authorization.

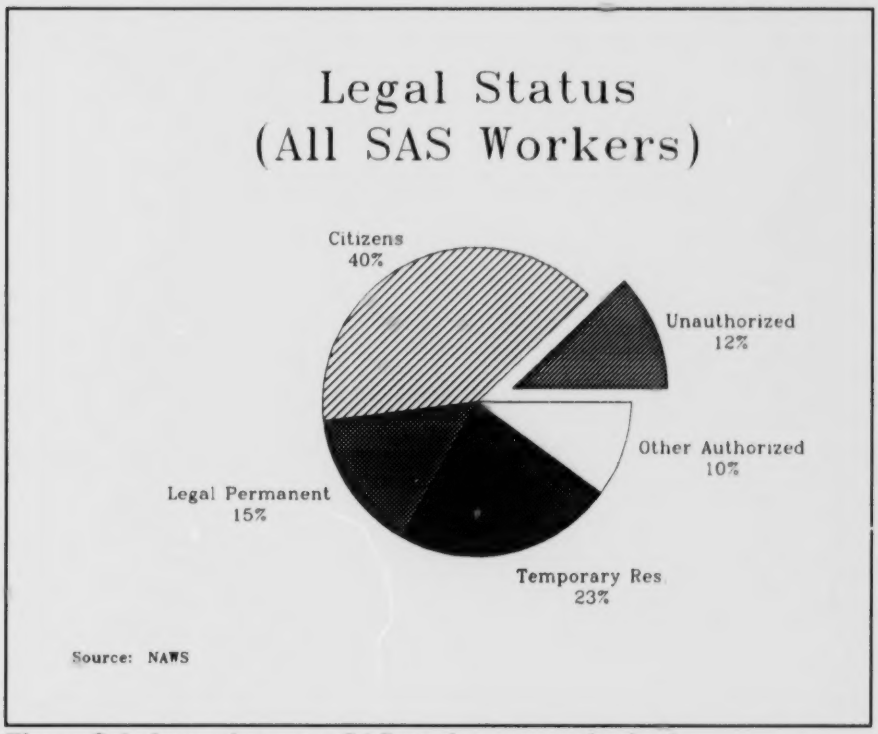


Figure 2.1 shows that most SAS workers are authorized.

LEGAL STATUS OF FOREIGN-BORN WORKERS

Most (81%) foreign-born SAS workers are individuals who are authorized to work in the United States. Authorized foreign-born workers make up 49% of all SAS laborers.

Foreign-born SAS workers can be broken down as follows: naturalized citizens, 2%; legal permanent residents, 25%; temporary residents, 38%; workers who obtained work authorization through other visas, 16%; and unauthorized workers 19%.

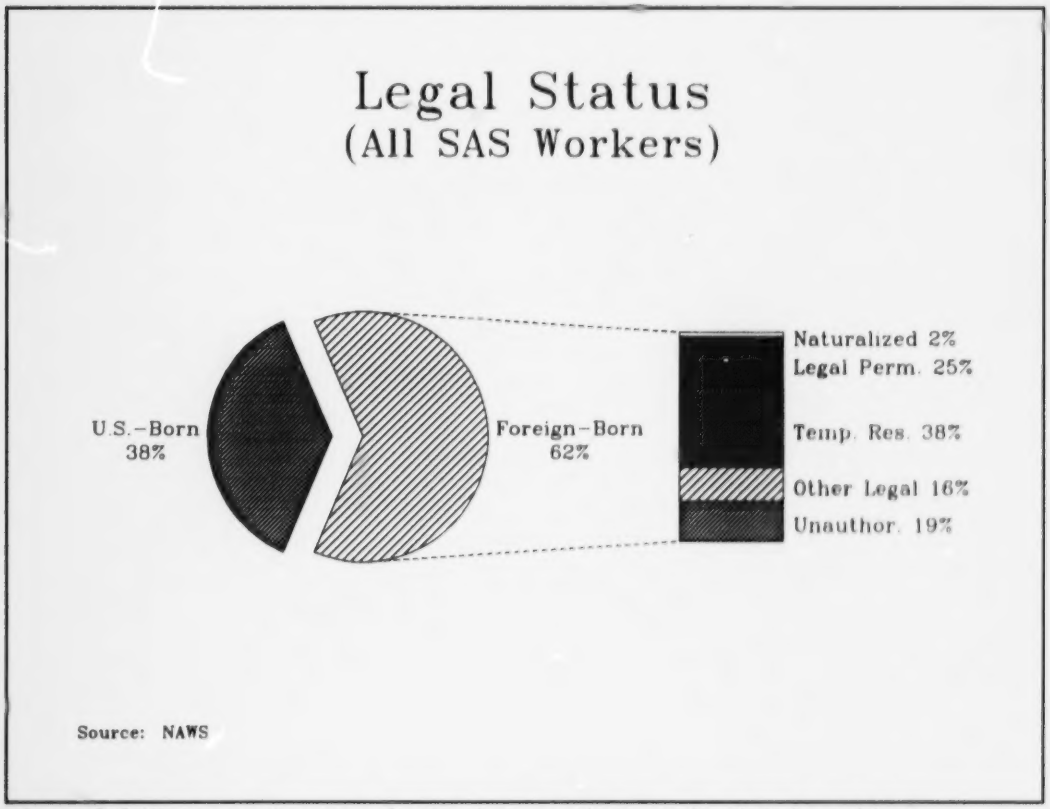


Figure 2.2 illustrates that most foreign born workers are legal U.S. residents.

The length of time that foreign-born SAS workers have been in the United States varies according to legal status. All naturalized U.S. citizens, 91% of legal permanent residents, 79% of temporary residents, 67% of other authorized workers, and 39% of undocumented workers have been in the United States for at least five years.

Foreign-born SAS workers who have had legal permanent residence status for five years or longer are eligible for citizenship. By this criterion, almost two-thirds (62%) of SAS workers with legal permanent residency are eligible for citizenship.

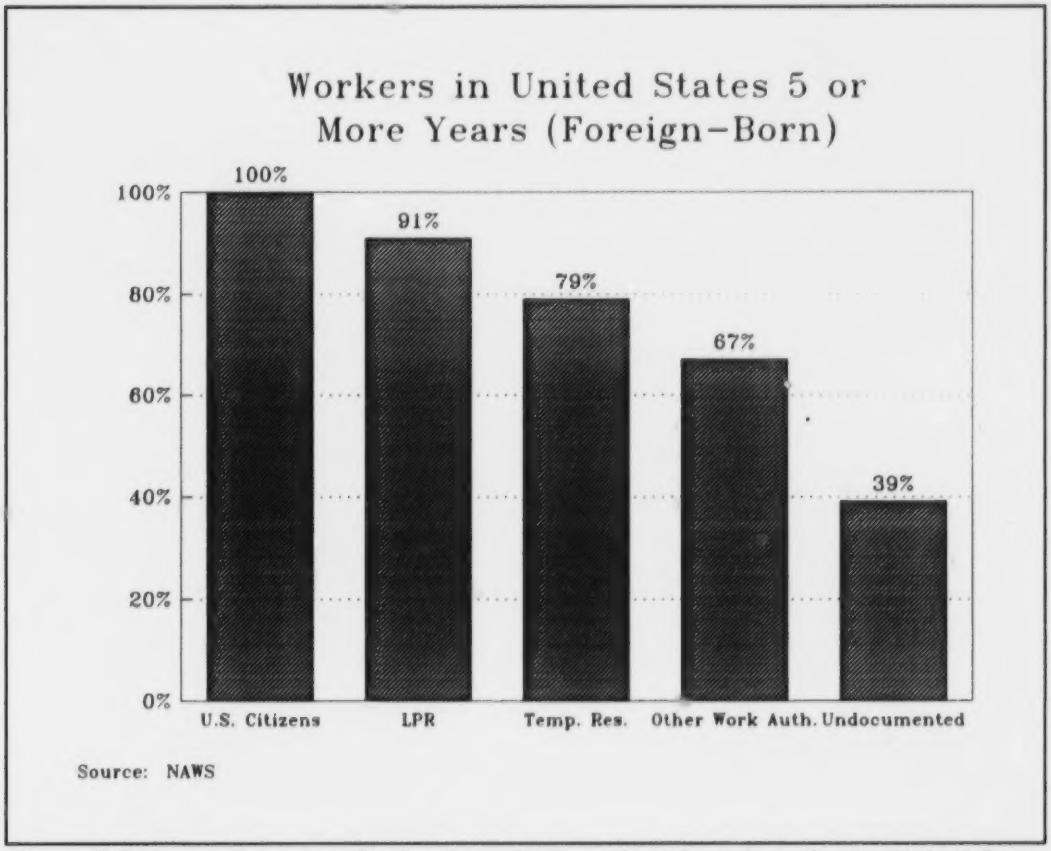


Figure 2.3 shows that many foreign-born SAS workers have been in the United States five or more years.

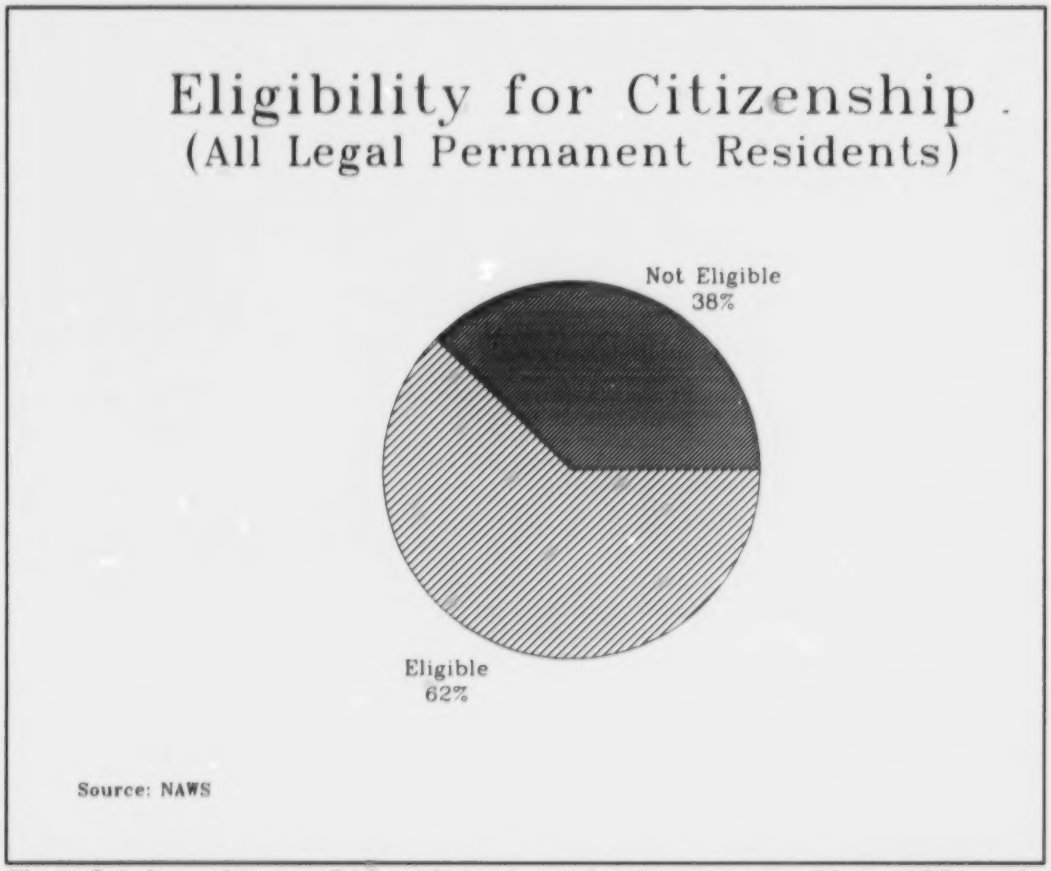


Figure 2.4 shows that most SAS workers who are legal permanent residents (LPR's make up about one-quarter of the SAS labor force) are eligible for citizenship.

PARTICIPATION IN IRCA LEGALIZATION PROGRAMS

IRCA offered three separate legalization programs. The Pre-82 program provided legalization for qualifying individuals who had been in the United States unlawfully since before 1982. This program also has been referred to as the general amnesty program, the five-year program, or the lawfully authorized worker (LAW) program. The Special Agricultural Worker (SAW) program provided legalization to agricultural workers who had performed ninety days of SAS work during the year commencing May 1, 1985. The third program offered legalization to qualifying Cuban and Haitian entrants.

Nationally, the legalization programs were very popular. Over 1.3 million individuals applied for the SAW program alone. Another 70,000 agricultural workers applied under the Pre-82 program.[3]

More than three years after their inception, IRCA legalization programs continue to be successful in increasing the supply of authorized agricultural workers. Thirty-two percent of SAS workers are IRCA authorized workers. These workers have SAS experience and have been in the United States for at least five years.

About one-third of SAS workers are SAW program participants (29%). Pre-82 applicants comprise 3% of the SAS work force, and Cuban-Haitian entrants constitute less than 1%.

The legalization process has several steps, and the timing of each step varies by program. Legalization applications had to be submitted before May 7, 1988 for Pre-82s and Cuban-Haitian entrants and before November 30, 1988 for SAWs. The INS began reviewing pending applications as they were submitted. Approved applicants were granted temporary resident status. Applicants who were rejected could enter an appeals process. After a waiting period, those with temporary resident status could apply for permanent residency. The waiting period was eighteen months for Pre-82s and Cuban-Haitian entrants. SAWs who could prove three years of work experience could receive permanent residency as of December 1, 1989. SAWs with less work experience could receive permanent resident status as of December 1, 1990.

The NAWS asked legalization applicants about the status of their applications. At the time of their interviews, SAW applicants could be divided as follows: 19% had pending applications, 76% were temporary residents, 4% were permanent residents, and 1% had been rejected. Applicants for the Pre-82 and the Cuban-Haitian program could be broken

[3]Information provided by the Department of Justice. SAW figure as of August 1990, Pre-82 information as of December 1990.

down as follows: 8% had pending applications; 42% had temporary resident status; and the remaining 50% were permanent residents.

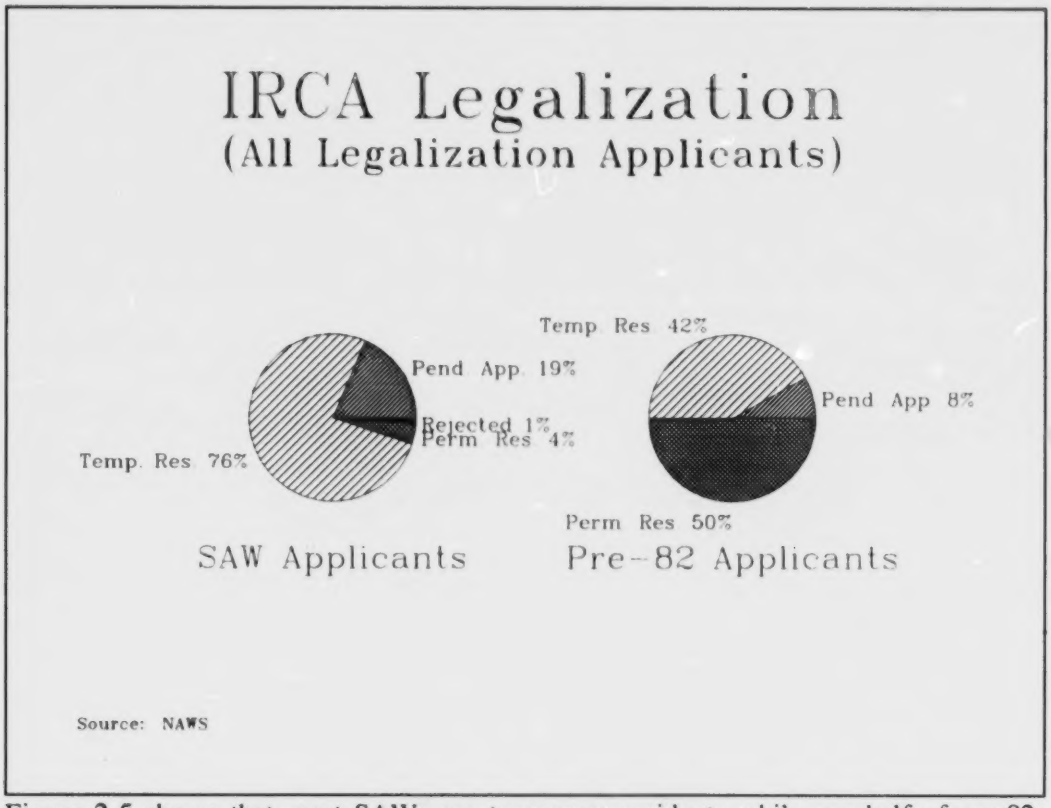


Figure 2.5 shows that most SAWs are temporary residents while one-half of pre-82s already have become legal permanent residents.

RAW APPLICANTS[4]

IRCA provides agricultural employers with a safety net in the form of the Replenishment Agricultural Workers (RAW) program. If the Secretaries of Agriculture and Labor determine that there is a shortage of SAS workers, the INS can admit RAWs. During the fall of 1989, interested individuals signed up for the RAW program. However, registrants are not assured of an eventual U.S. visa. They can be admitted to the United States only when a SAS labor shortage is declared and will be chosen by lottery from among those who qualify. Despite the uncertainty of the program, over 600,000 foreign nationals registered for this program.[5]

The NAWS asked employed SAS workers whether they had registered for the RAW program. In FY 1990 approximately 18% of the foreign-born SAS workers had registered for the RAW program. These registrants come from many sources. Overall, more than one-fourth (28%) of the unauthorized SAS workers applied for the RAW program. The remaining SAS workers who had applied for the RAW program were legally authorized workers who were not yet permanent residents. This group included legalization applicants who had pending applications, temporary residents, and individuals with other visa statuses. Thirteen percent of SAW applicants registered for the RAW program as did 27% of those who were not temporary residents, but held other work authorized visas.

Over one-third (35%) of those who registered for the RAW program are currently undocumented. Twenty-three percent are temporary residents, 26% have other legal status, and 16% have a tourist or student visa.

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[4] Since the fall interviewing cycle coincided with the RAW application period, respondents interviewed during that period were not asked if they had applied for the RAW program. However, SAS workers interviewed in the winter and spring/summer cycles were asked about their participation in the RAW program.

[5] Information provided by the U.S. Department of Justice.

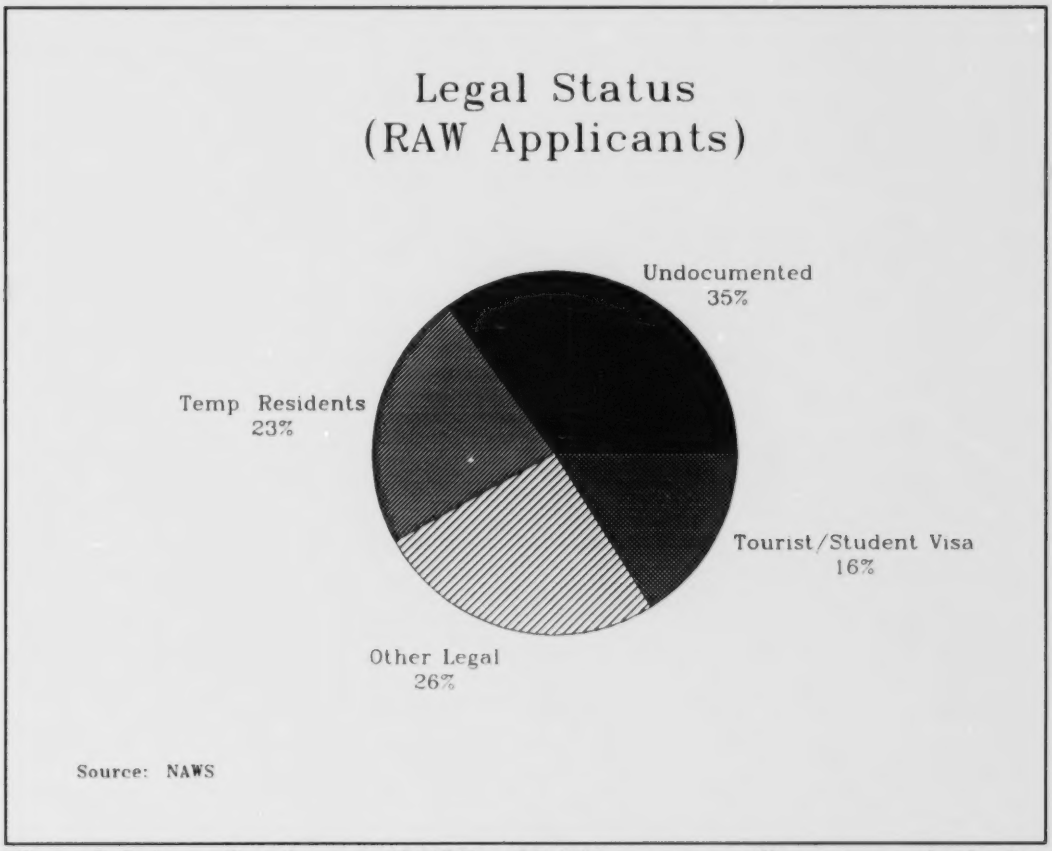


Figure 2.6 shows that almost half (49%) of RAW program applicants are authorized to work.

CHAPTER 3
LITERACY, SCHOOLING AND ENGLISH SKILLS

INTRODUCTION

This chapter covers native language and home-country education, followed by adult school enrollment and English language proficiency and literacy. The NAWS results are used to present some indicators of the language proficiency of adults doing SAS work. This analysis contributes to larger efforts being made in the United States to define and measure the literacy levels of both native English speakers and those who have limited proficiency in English.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

- Most (53%) SAS workers have completed eight or fewer years of formal education.
- Spanish is the primary language of two out of three (65%) SAS workers.
- Two out of five (40%) SAS workers say that they can speak English well: 31% are native English speakers, and 9% are bilingual.
- About one-third (36%) of SAS workers say that they can read English well.
- About one-third (35%) of SAS workers have tried to improve their skills by taking an adult education class. English is the most popular type of class.

USING THE NAWS TO ASSESS LITERACY AND LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY

Even though, at present, there is no agreed-upon definition of what constitutes proficiency in language and literacy, there are a number of generally accepted indicators (grade level, educational achievement, self-assessment of language ability) that allow us to make inferences about the reading, writing and English speaking skills of the SAS workers surveyed.

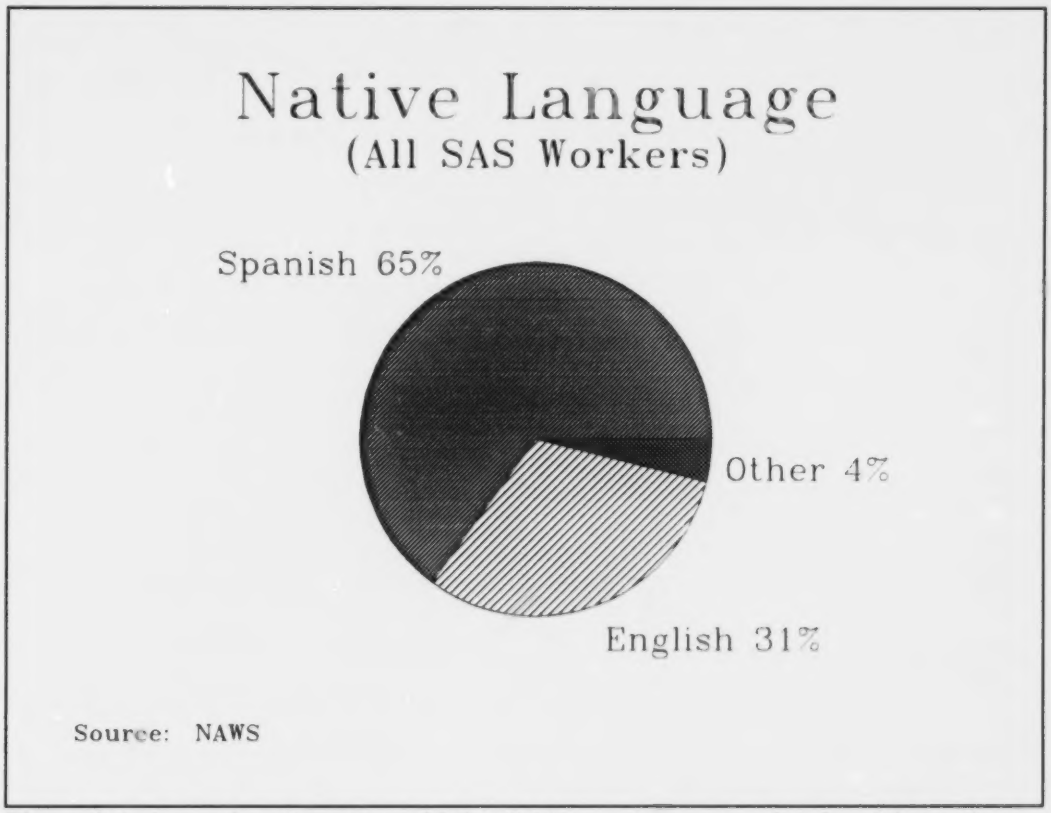


Figure 3.1 shows that almost two-thirds of SAS workers are native Spanish speakers.

PRIMARY LANGUAGE AND SCHOOLING

Almost all (95%) SAS workers received their highest level of formal education in their country of origin. Consequently, almost all SAS workers received all of their education in their primary language. An exception to this are some individuals who come from language minority groups in their native countries. In these cases, education may be provided not in the language spoken in the home, but in the official language of the society, a language in which these groups may only have limited proficiency. Groups falling into this category are U.S.-born Spanish speakers, and Mexicans and Central Americans whose native language is not Spanish.

USING GRADE LEVELS TO MEASURE LITERACY

Though many studies report educational grade level as a measure of literacy, examinations of census data have shown that equating literacy levels with grade levels is in many ways problematic. School completion data are not able to measure out-of-school learning in language and literacy. Nevertheless, the amount of schooling a worker has received can be used as a strong indicator of level of literacy.

Most SAS workers have had little formal schooling. The median level of education is eighth grade. This measure includes all formal schooling whether received in the United States or abroad. On average, U.S.- educated workers have had more years of instruction than those educated abroad. While the median level of education of SAS workers educated in the United States is eleventh grade, the median level of education for those educated abroad is sixth grade.

SAS workers who received schooling in their primary language have higher median levels of education than those who were taught in a second (or third) language. Within the United States, the median level of education is twelfth grade for native English speakers and tenth grade for those whose native language in not English. The median level of

education abroad is six years for all foreign workers but only two years for Central Americans and Mexicans whose native language is not Spanish.

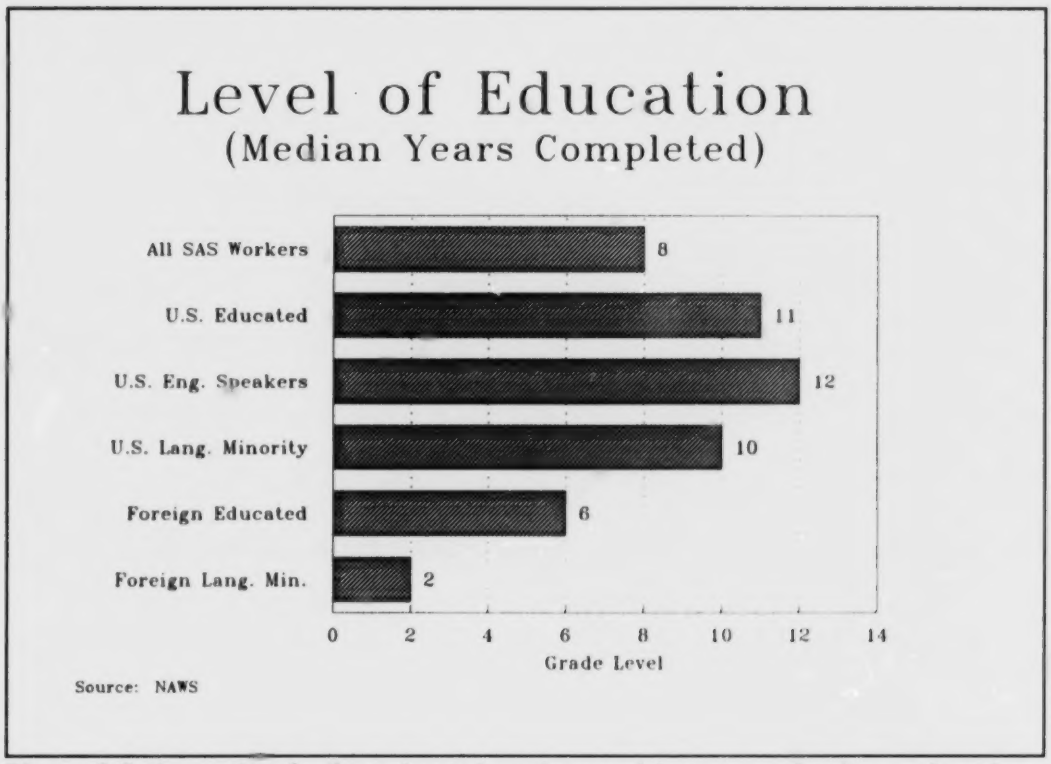


Figure 3.2 shows that foreign educated workers and language minority workers have lower education levels than U.S. English speakers.

Although grade levels completed in school and literacy levels do not necessarily correlate with present abilities to read and write, school completion data provide some indication of how well adults can process and use print. Jeanne Chall, director of Harvard University's Reading Lab, divides adults into three major groups:

Totally Illiterate - skills are below the fourth grade level and the individual cannot acquire information through print.

Functionally Illiterate - a person who can read between the fourth and seventh grade levels.

Marginally Literate - a person who can read between the eighth and twelfth grade levels, but lacks the twelfth grade equivalence needed in a complex technological society.[6]

Assuming that those SAS workers surveyed have not had many opportunities to improve their education and increase their literacy levels, most (75%) SAS workers would have difficulty obtaining information from printed materials in any language according to Chall's standards. Twenty-seven percent of SAS workers have between eight and twelve years of education and thus are marginally literate. Another 32% percent have between a fourth and seventh grade education and fall into the functionally illiterate

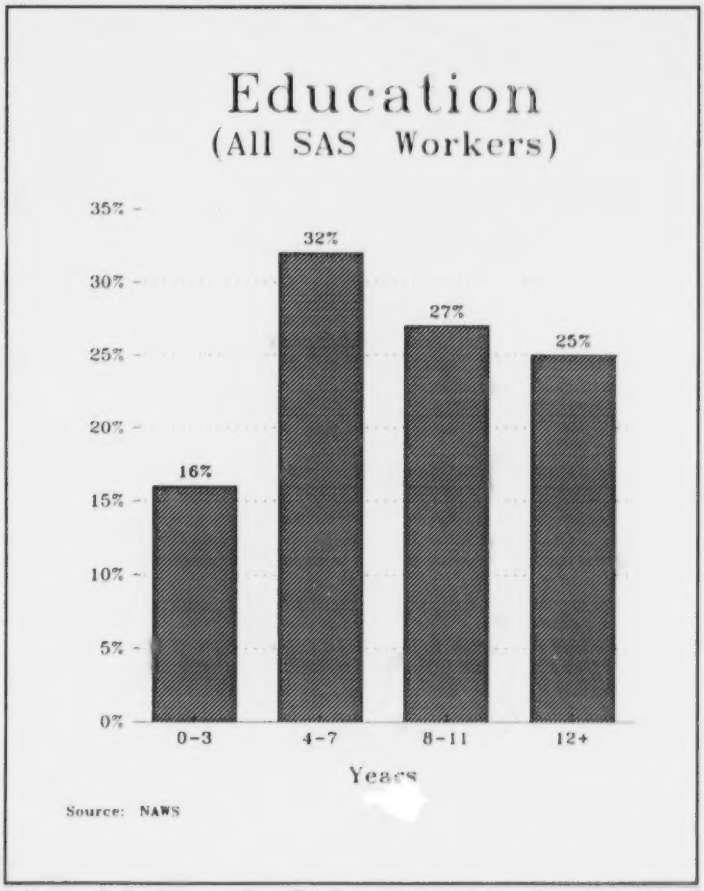


Figure 3.3 shows that SAS workers have low levels of education.

[6] Source: *LSCA Programs: An Action Report II,* U.S. Department of Education, Washington, D.C., April 1989, p. 3.

category. Finally, 16% of SAS workers have less than a fourth grade education and are thus considered totally illiterate.

These numbers have strong consequences in an economy in which a significant number of employers report that many high school graduates lack the basic skills needed for entry-level jobs. The lack of literacy may impact the effectiveness of workers in jobs which require reading and writing. It may also severely limit the economic and social opportunities of these adults.

It is important, however, to point out that many of these workers have strengths that are not reflected in grade or literacy levels. NAWS data show that most adults doing SAS work have been employed in the United States for more than fifteen years. For the most part, they have been self-sufficient, have found housing, raised families and have managed to "survive" in this country.

ADULT EDUCATION

SAS workers have shown a strong inclination to better their situation despite low levels of formal education. More than one-fourth (28%) of SAS workers report that they intend to leave farm work within the next five years. Another index of their will to improve is high levels of voluntary participation in adult education classes.

Almost one-third (32%) of SAS workers, both U.S. and foreign educated, have taken adult education classes. This is impressive given the long hours, erratic schedules and migratory life styles characteristic of seasonal farm work. English classes and citizenship classes seem to be the most popular of these classes. Seventeen percent of SAS workers who are non-native English speakers have enrolled in English classes. Interestingly, while many immigrants are currently enrolled in English and citizenship classes which are required under some legalization programs, SAWs are not required to take these classes. Of the SAS workers who are not U.S. citizens, 12% have taken a U.S. citizenship class.

SAS workers enroll in other types of classes: 4% have taken job training classes, 5% have participated in GED classes, and 4% have enrolled in other types of classes.

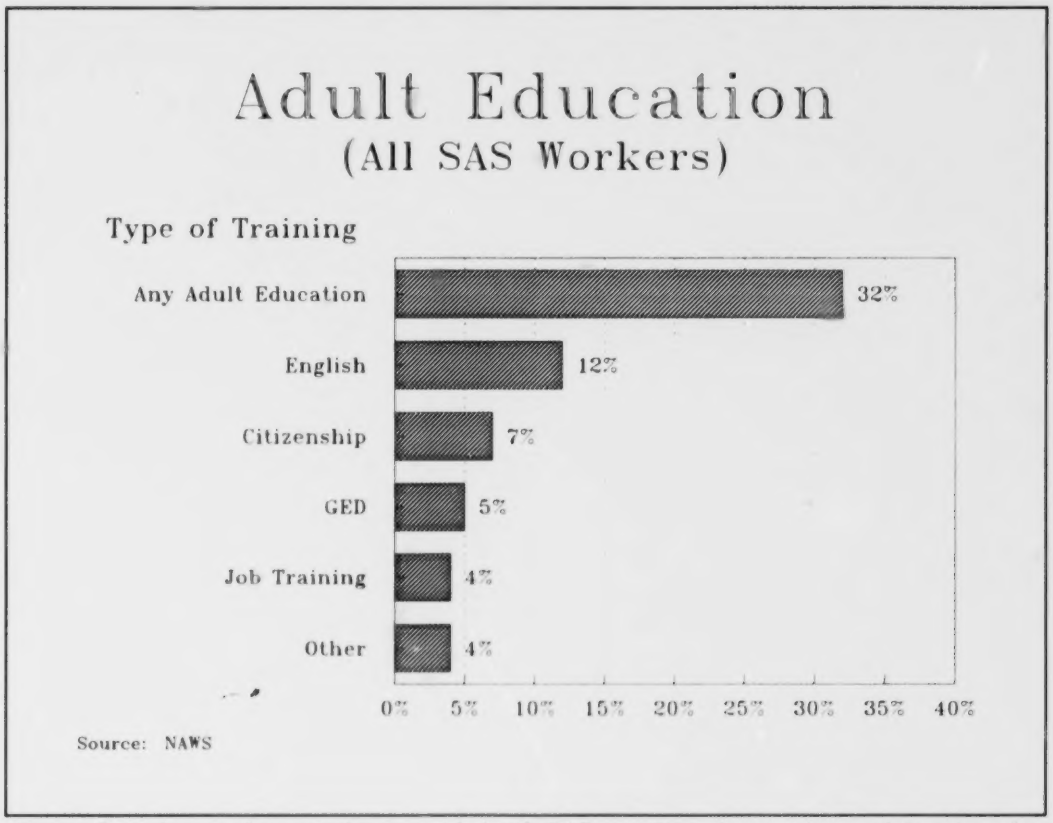


Figure 3.4 shows that nearly one-third of SAS workers have taken adult education classes.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE SKILLS AND LITERACY

Traditionally, English fluency and literacy have not been job requirements for most SAS work. When non-English speakers are employed in SAS work, it is common for foremen to provide hiring, firing and work instructions in the workers' native language. In some states, materials for skilled farm jobs such as pesticide operatives or licensing papers for farm labor contractors are available in languages other than English.

Many workers whose native language is not English have made efforts to learn English. As mentioned earlier, of the SAS workers whose primary language is not English, 17% have taken an English as a Second Language (ESL) class in the United States. Approximately 11% of SAS workers whose primary language is not English have completed their highest grade in the United States (probably receiving some English instruction).

Even so, most SAS workers whose first language is not English have only limited English speaking abilities. In responding to a self-assessment question about their English speaking capabilities, 42% of SAS workers whose native language is not English say they speak no English, 45% speak some English, and 13% say that they speak English well. A total of 40% of the SAS labor force speaks English well.

The ability to speak and read English varies across different groups:

- Of SAS workers who are U.S.-born Hispanics, 74% speak and 73% read English fluently.
- Of the Asian SAS workers, 50% speak and 46% read English fluently.
- Of the Mexican SAS workers, 7% speak and 4% read English fluently.
- Of the other Latin-born SAS workers, only 1% speak and 1% read English fluently.

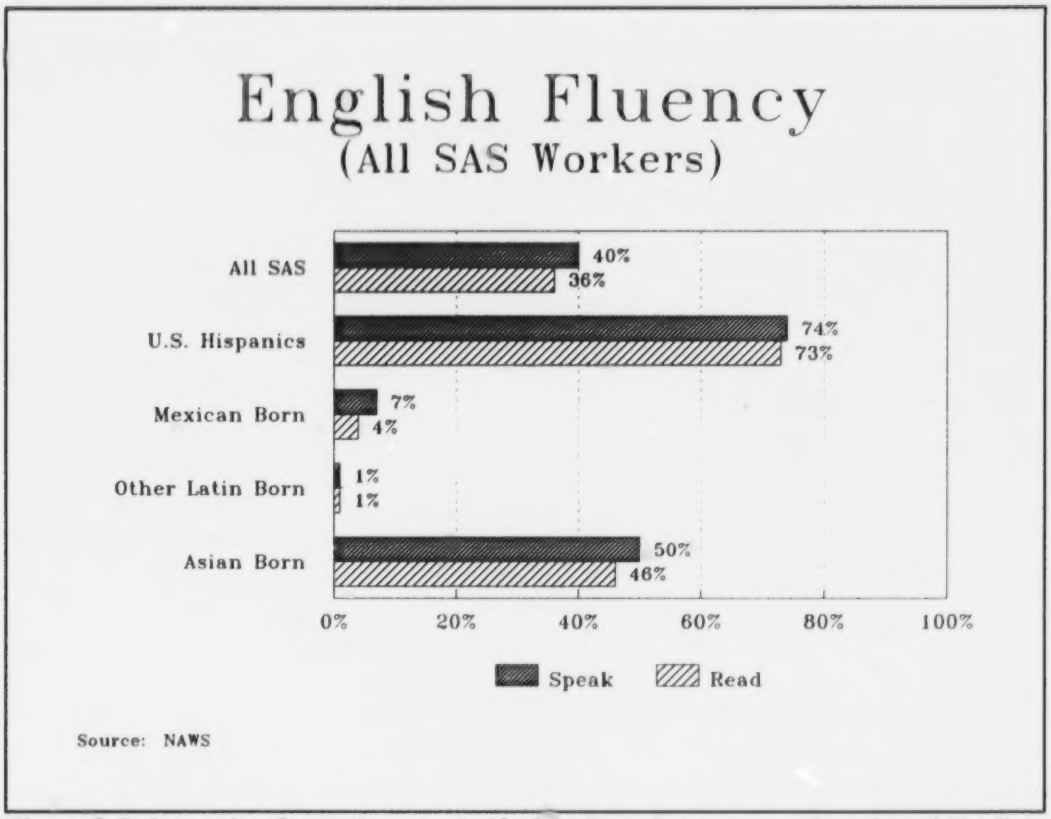


Figure 3.5 shows that fewer than one-half of SAS workers can speak and read English.

CHAPTER 4
FAMILY RESIDENCE AND WORK SITE HOUSEHOLD COMPOSITION

INTRODUCTION

This chapter reports information on family residence and household composition. It covers family type, family residence, and household size and composition.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

- The majority (70%) of SAS workers are married and/or have children.

- More than one-half (57%) of SAS workers reside with their families at the work site. Men (46%) and foreign-born (47%) workers are the least likely to reside with family at the work site.

- Between two and four people live in most SAS worker households.

- The vast majority (85%) of adults in households of SAS worker parents or married couples hold jobs. Three-quarters (75%) of the adults in households of single SAS workers who live with parents work, as do 97% of the adults in households of single SAS workers who live away from parents.

- Two out of five (41%) of children over the age of fourteen in SAS worker households hold a job.

FAMILY TYPE

For the purposes of this analysis, families of SAS workers have been divided into three types: families headed by parents (whether married or single); married individuals without children; and single individuals.

The majority (54%) of SAS workers are parents. Sixteen percent are married with no children, and 30% are single.[7]

WORK SITE FAMILY RESIDENCE AND HOUSEHOLD COMPOSITION

It is common for SAS workers to live away from their immediate families while they are doing SAS work. These "unaccompanied" SAS workers may have distinct behaviors and special needs. This distinction, therefore, has been a subject of analysis. Unaccompanied SAS workers work away from their parents, spouse and children. If a parent SAS worker lives with his or her children or spouse, a married SAS worker lives with his or her spouse, or a SAS worker of any kind lives with a parent while doing SAS work, then we classify that SAS worker as accompanied. Others are unaccompanied.

An unaccompanied SAS worker should not be confused with a migrant worker. Families residing together at a work site may be follow-the-crop migrants, who move from work site to work site. They may also be shuttle migrants, who move away from their home base to a farm work area where they settle for the work year. On the other hand, SAS worker families may not be migrants, but rather settled families living within commuting distance of the work site. The SAS worker is not unaccompanied in any of these cases. On the other hand, SAS workers who do not migrate to perform SAS work, but live away

[7] The definition of single here is different from the definition in chapter 2. It excludes those SAS workers whose marital status is single but have children. These SAS workers are categorized as parents.

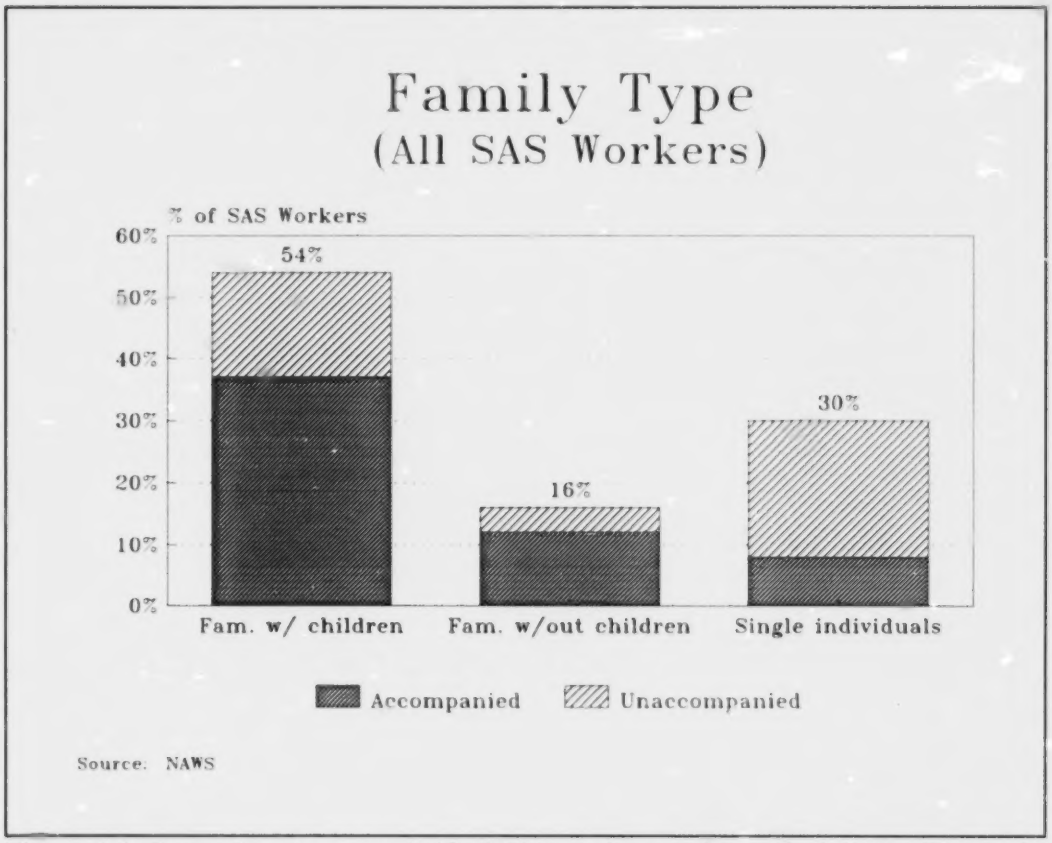


Figure 4.1 shows that about one-half of SAS workers reside with their families at the work site.

from their immediate family are unaccompanied.

NAWS does not collect information about payments or remittances of single individuals to their non-resident families. It cannot distinguish single unaccompanied adults without family responsibilities from those who remit a substantial part of their income to parents or other relatives. Therefore, a single unaccompanied SAS worker is not necessarily free from family responsibilities.

More than one-half (57%) of SAS workers are accompanied. Another 21% have spouses and/or children who live elsewhere and are also not accompanied by their parents. The remaining 22% are single workers, unaccompanied by their parents. Over two-thirds

(68%) of SAS workers with children are accompanied; 75% of married SAS workers without children are accompanied; and 26% of single individuals are accompanied.

Almost one-third (30%) of SAS workers who are married and/or have children live away from their families. Eighty percent of these individuals have family abroad. More than one-half of SAS workers who have children and/or spouses abroad have children (65%) and/or spouses (73%) living in Mexico; 28% have children and 18% have spouses in the United States; 3% have children and 3% have spouses in Central America; 1% have children and 1% have spouses in the Caribbean; 1% have children and 1% have spouses in Asia. The remaining 2% have children elsewhere and 4% report having spouses who live elsewhere.

One out of four (26%) single workers lives with their U.S. resident parents, and three out of four (74%) live on their own, away from their U.S. or foreign resident parents.

GENDER AND WORK SITE FAMILY RESIDENCE

While less than one-half (46%) of male SAS workers are accompanied, 83% of women SAS workers are accompanied.

This pattern occurs in all family types. Almost all (97%) of SAS worker mothers reside with their spouse, children and/or parents. Only 56% of fathers, on the other hand, reside with their spouse, children and/or parents. Among married couples without children, only 66% of the men reside with their wives and/or parents at the work site, while 86% of the women reside with their husbands and/or parents. Finally, 38% percent of single women live with their parents, compared to 23% of single men.

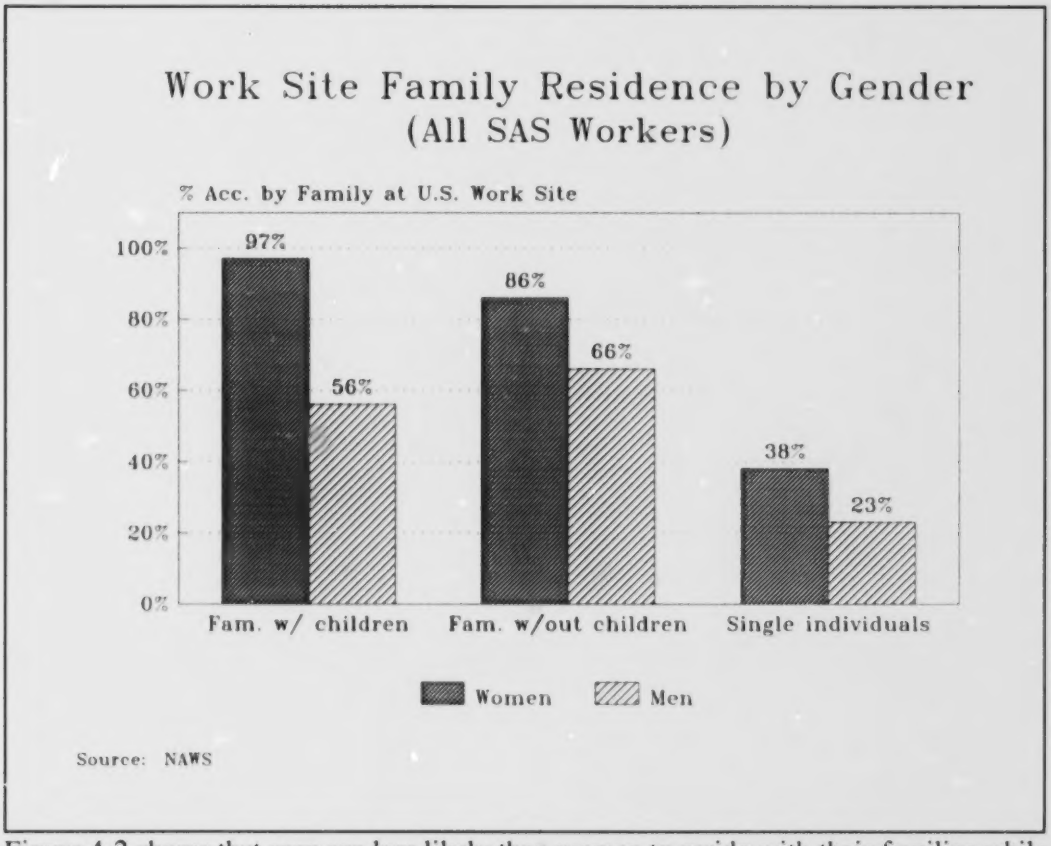


Figure 4.2 shows that men are less likely than women to reside with their families while working.

PLACE OF BIRTH AND FAMILY RESIDENCE

U.S.-born workers are more likely to reside with their families than foreign-born workers (72% vs. 47%). This is true across all family types. U.S-born parents are more likely to be accompanied than foreign-born parents (84% vs. 60%). Similarly, 85% of U.S.-born married SAS workers without children are accompanied, compared to 68% of those who are foreign-born. Finally, with regard to single SAS workers without children, 44% of those who are U.S.-born and 16% of those who are foreign-born are accompanied by parents.

Whether or not the SAS worker resides with family varies by ethnic origin: 76% of U.S.-born whites, 71% of African-Americans, 65% of U.S.-born Hispanics, 47% of Mexican-born workers, 28% of Central American-born, and 38% of other non U.S.-born are accompanied.

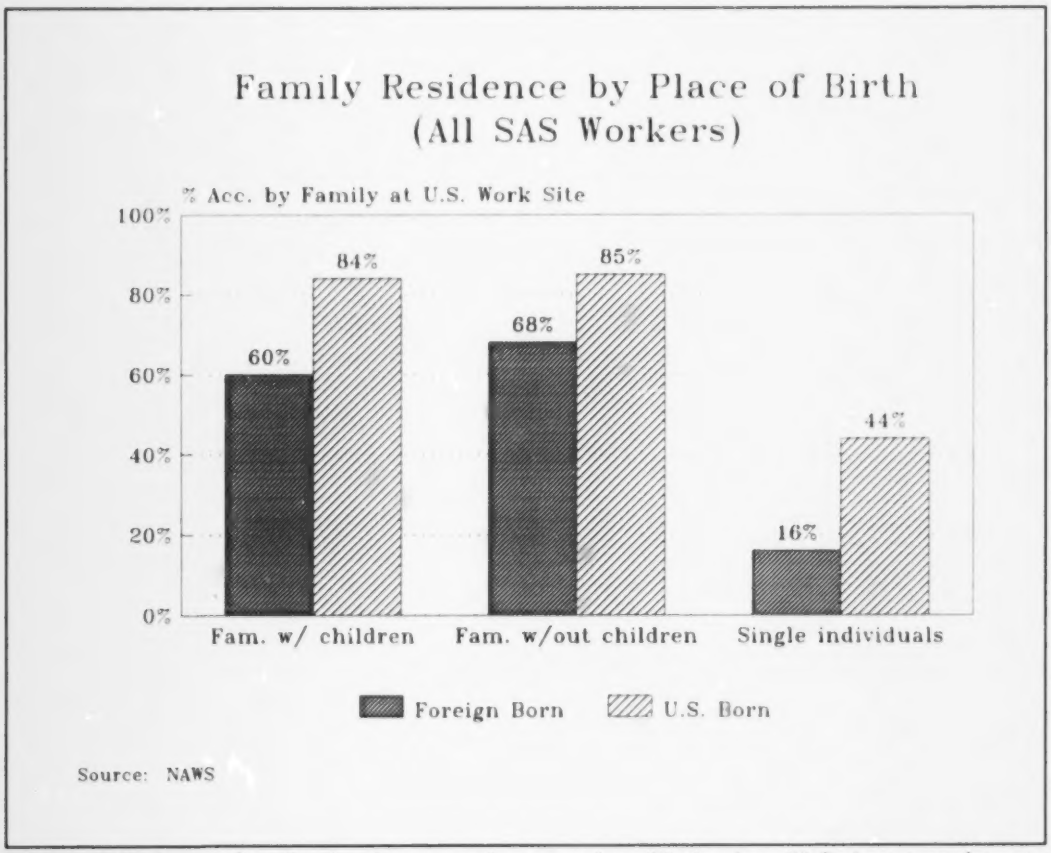


Figure 4.3 shows that foreign-born workers are less likely than U.S.-born workers to reside with their families while working.

HOUSEHOLD SIZE AND COMPOSITION

SAS workers who are parents tend to live in nuclear families. Most (84%) parents are married. Their households average three to four people: most commonly consisting of the worker, the spouse and one or two children. One third of the children of SAS workers live away from their SAS worker parent. The median number of children in the household for SAS worker parents is two.

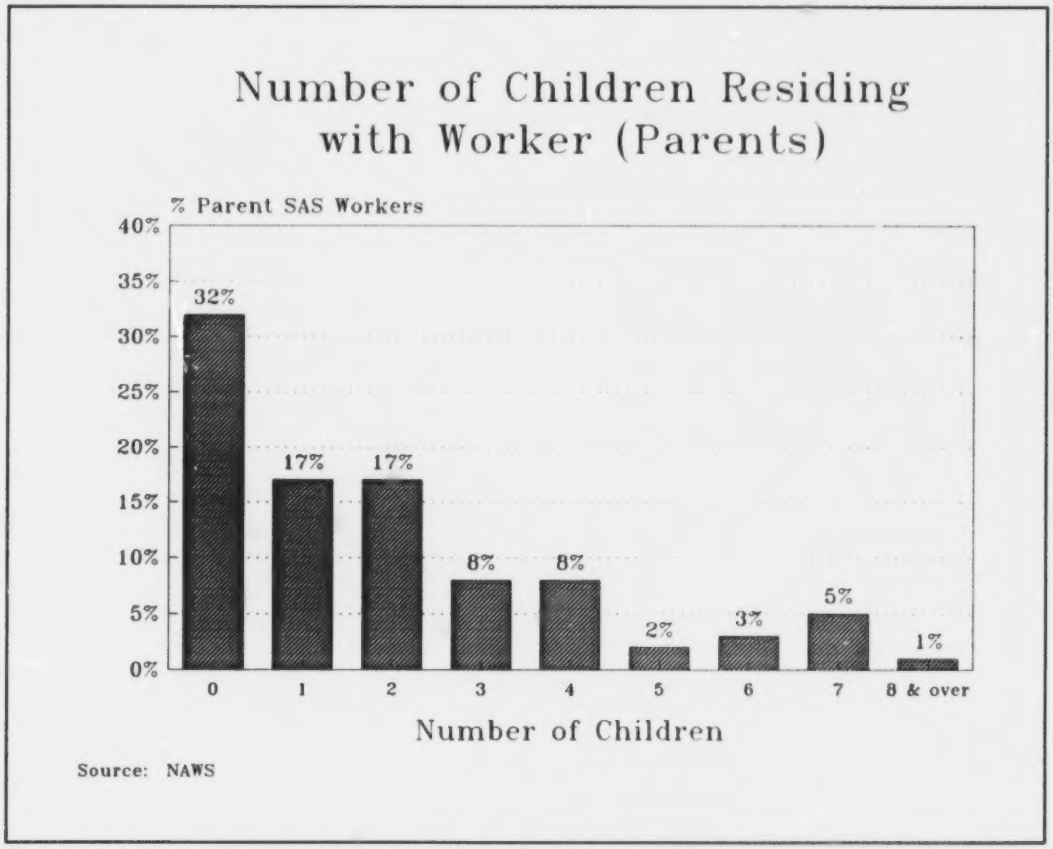


Figure 4.4 shows that the median number of children residing with a SAS worker parent is two.

The nuclear SAS worker family sometimes serves as an "anchor family" for extended family and friends. The average married SAS worker without children lives with his or

her spouse and one other person in a three-person household. Non-family and extended family members are sometimes found in households headed by SAS worker parents or SAS worker married couples. One sibling or extended family member is present, on average, in one-quarter (25%) of these households. One non-family member is present, on average, in about one-half (46%) of these households.

Single (and childless) SAS workers residing with their parents live in households that average four immediate family members over the age of fourteen: the respondent, two parents, and one sibling. These families at times also have extended family or non-family members living with them averaging one extended family member in eight households and one non-family member in one out of ten households.[8] The households of single SAS workers who live away from parents average five people, including one sibling.

EMPLOYMENT OF HOUSEHOLD MEMBERS

In households of SAS worker parents and married SAS workers without children, 85% of household members aged fifteen or older work. Almost one-half (41%) of the children aged fifteen and older work, one-half of them in non-SAS jobs.

In households where the SAS worker is a single (and childless) adult living with his or her parents, about three out of four (74%) adults work. On average, one of the three workers is engaged in a non-SAS job. Single SAS workers who live away from their parents typically live in a household of workers. On average, two of the four house-mates work in SAS work and the other two work in non-SAS work.

[8] Averages do not include siblings who are under the age of fifteen.

CHAPTER 5
INCOME, ASSETS AND USE OF GOVERNMENT PROGRAMS

INTRODUCTION

This chapter reports information on SAS workers' incomes, assets and use of social services. It covers personal income, family income, assets in the United States and home country, as well as family poverty status, and use of government and private social services.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

- One-half (50%) of SAS workers earn less than $7,500 per year.
- One-half (50%) of SAS worker families have incomes below the poverty level, despite the prevalence of families with multiple wage earners.
- Fewer than one-fifth (18%) of SAS workers are recipients of needs-based social services. Food Stamps is the type of assistance most often received.
- Fewer than one-third (29%) of SAS workers receive income from worker or employer supported government programs.
- A small minority (6%) of SAS workers receive aid from private organizations.

PERSONAL INCOME

The median annual income for a SAS worker is between $5,000 and $7,500. Authorized workers have a median annual income of $5,000 - $7,500, compared to $2,500 - $5,000 for unauthorized workers.

FAMILY INCOME AND POVERTY STATUS

The median family income for SAS workers in all family types is between $7,500 and $10,000. One-half (50%) of SAS workers live in poverty, as defined by the U.S. Census Bureau.[9] Larger SAS families are more likely to live in poverty.

Married SAS workers without children are the least likely (30%) to live in poverty. A higher number of SAS workers with children (54%) and single workers (53%) are poor.

Foreign-born SAS workers are twice as likely as U.S.-born SAS workers to live in poverty (62% vs. 31%).

[9]*Money Income and Poverty Status in the United States* (CENSUS, Series P-60, No. 168, 1989) defines poverty as an annual income below $6,452 for one individual, below $8,343 for two, below $9,885 for three, below $12,675 for four, below $14,990 for five, below $16,921 for six, below $19,162 for seven, below $21,328 for eight and below $25,480 for nine or more.

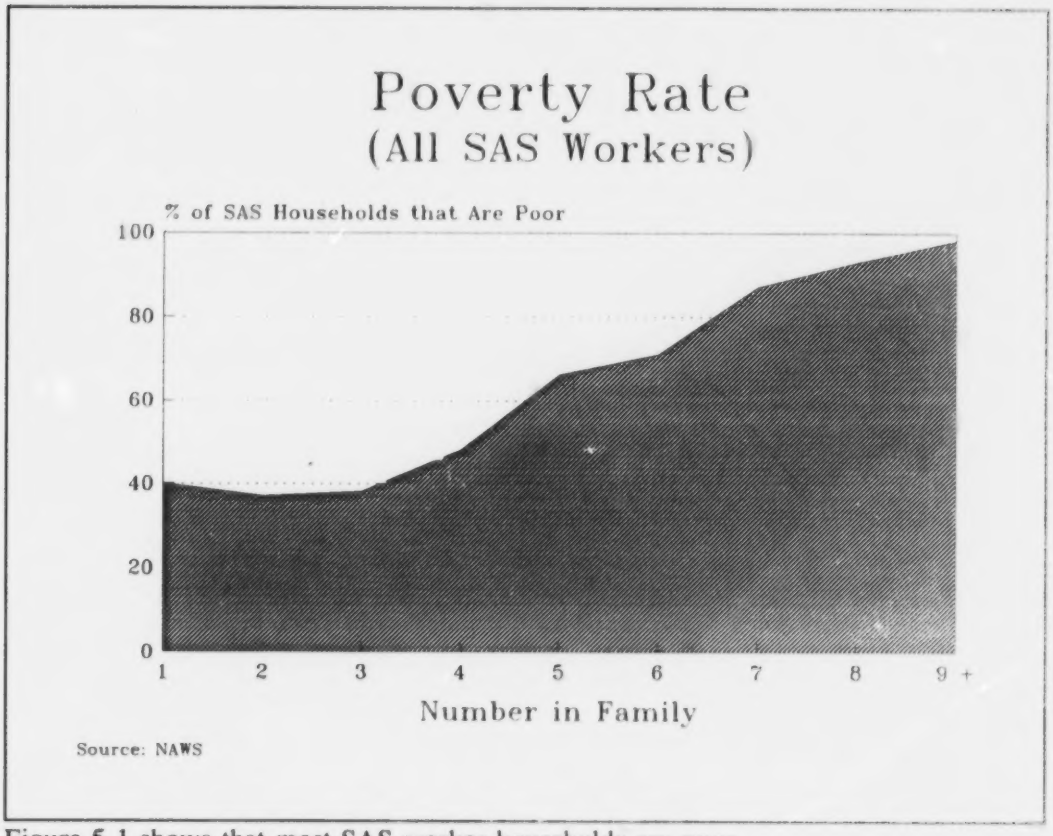


Figure 5.1 shows that most SAS worker households are poor.

HOUSES, VEHICLES, AND OTHER ASSETS

Forty-five percent of SAS workers own no property apart from their personal belongings. The most frequently (42%) owned asset is a car or truck. Despite low incomes, approximately one-third (37%) of SAS workers own or are buying a home.

Proportionately more U.S.-born workers than foreign-born workers own a vehicle (58% and 39%, respectively). One-third (33%) of foreign-born workers own assets in their country of origin.

SOCIAL SERVICES

Despite the low levels of income and limited assets of SAS workers, few (18%) SAS workers report that their households received any type of needs-based assistance from government operated social service programs during the two years preceding the interview. The most frequently used social service is Food Stamps, which is used by almost 16% of SAS worker households.

SAS workers whose households received needs-based government social services within the last two years can be broken down as follows: Aid to Families with Dependent Children; (3%), Food Stamps (16%); General Assistance [local welfare] (3%); and public housing (2%). In some cases, households used more than one service.

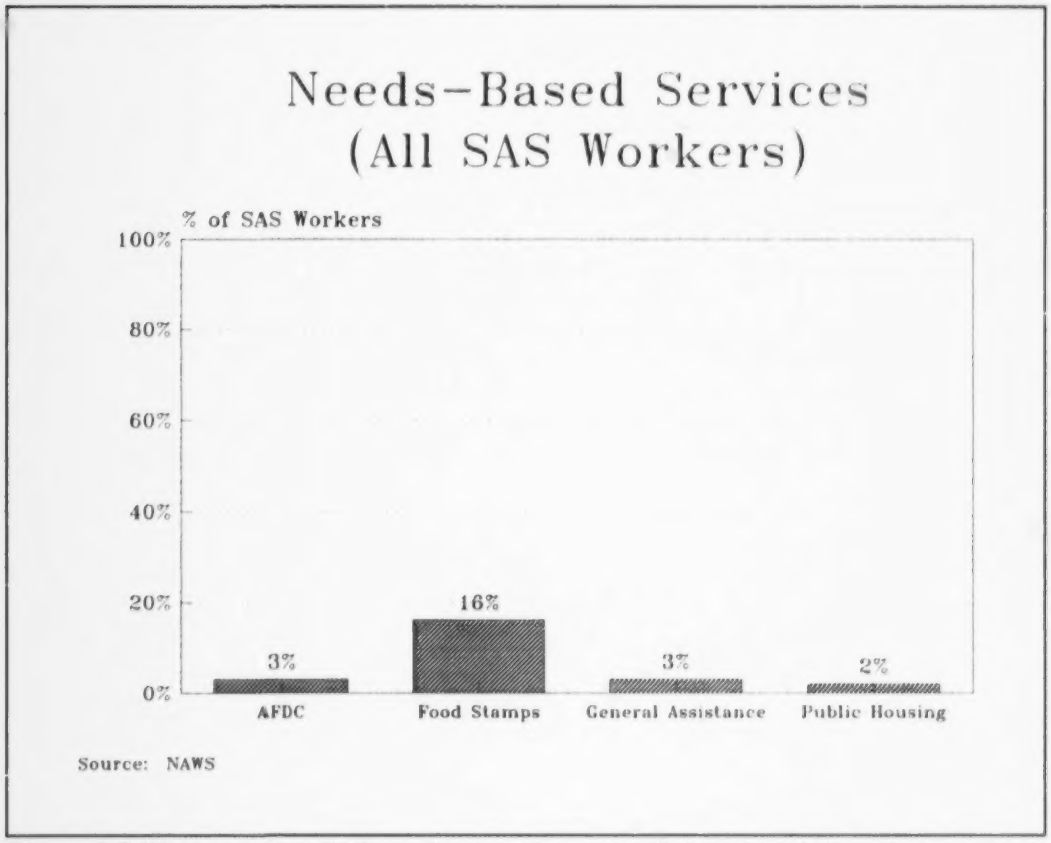


Figure 5.2 illustrates that SAS workers rarely use needs-based social services.

Families of SAS workers who are U.S. citizens and legal permanent residents have the highest usage of needs-based social services (23% and 21%, respectively). Nine percent of temporary resident and other authorized worker families use needs-based services. Families of 2% of unauthorized SAS workers use needs-based social services.[10]

[10]Since the questions referred to workers' household use of social services, no inferences can or should be drawn about unauthorized use of social services. We do not know the legal statuses of other members of the households. There may or may not be other household members who qualify for needs-based social services.

Twenty-nine percent of SAS worker families have received income within the last two years from government programs funded by worker and/or employer contributions. Twenty-five percent of SAS worker families received unemployment insurance; 5% received disability insurance; 4% received Social Security; and 2% received Veteran Pensions.

Additionally, 6% of SAS workers say their families received aid from private organizations. The number of SAS workers whose families have received services from private agencies can be broken down as follows: churches or religious charities (5%), and community organizations (1%).

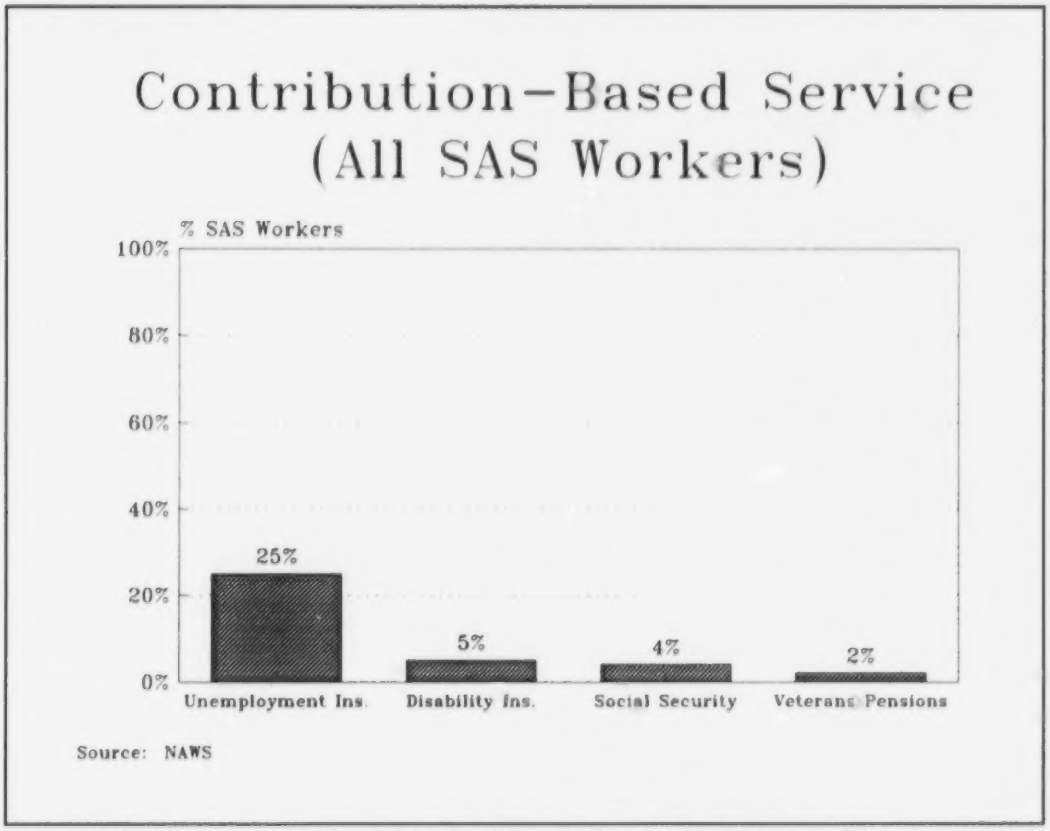


Figure 5.3 shows that SAS worker families receive little assistance from government programs for workers.

SECTION II: EMPLOYMENT PATTERNS AND JOB CHARACTERISTICS

CHAPTER 6
EMPLOYMENT HISTORY AND LABOR SUPPLY

INTRODUCTION

This chapter reports information on SAS worker employment patterns and their relationship to working conditions.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

- SAS workers spend about one-half (49%) of the year doing SAS work.
- Most (74%) SAS workers would be willing to do more SAS work, but the majority (59%) are not willing to migrate in search of additional work.
- Most (72%) SAS workers plan to continue doing SAS work indefinitely unless they become physically unable.
- Among those intending to leave SAS work, the most common (38%) reason given is dissatisfaction with the terms of employment.
- In order of decreasing importance, the job factors ranked as important in sustaining SAS workers' willingness to engage in SAS work are wages, good relations with the employer, benefits and job stability.

PREVIOUS YEAR'S WORK HISTORY

In order to qualify for the NAWS, all workers had to have been employed in a SAS job at the time of the interview, and hence, at some time in the year before the interview. In

a one year period, more than one-half (58%) of SAS workers spend some time not working while in the United States; 40% of SAS workers spend some time abroad; and 36% spend some time in a non-SAS job.

SAS workers spend on average twenty-six weeks, or 49% of their available work time, doing SAS work. These workers also spend eighteen weeks (35% of the year) not working in the United States. About one-half (46%) of this time is spent abroad, and the rest (54%) is spent in the United States. The remaining 16% of the year, or eight weeks, is spent doing non-SAS work.

SAS workers, on average, have worked at SAS work ten years, or about two out of every three of their total working years.

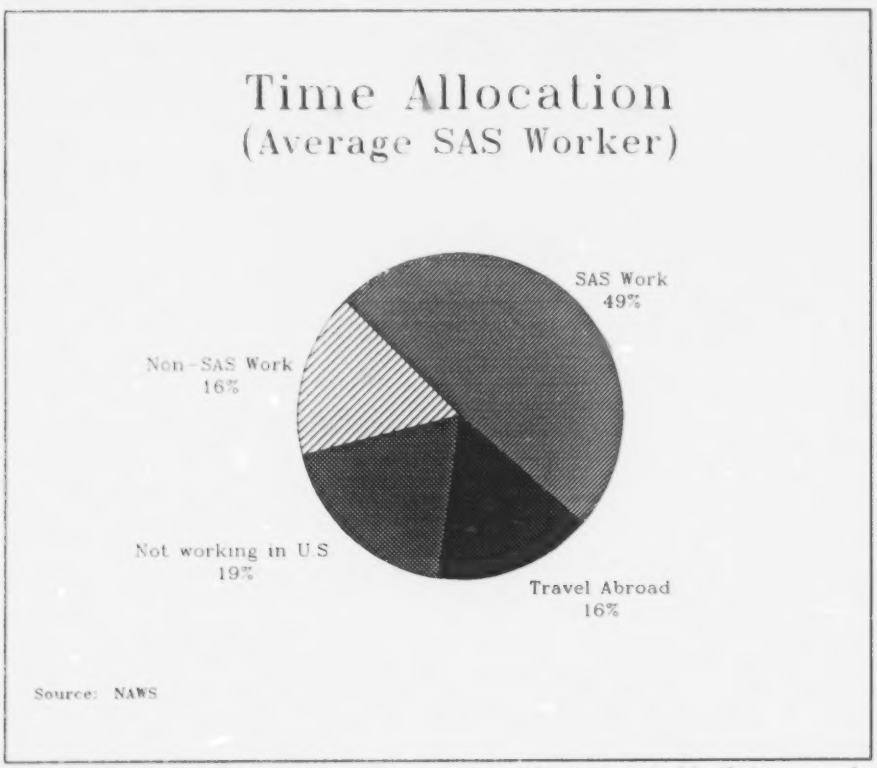


Figure 6.1 shows that SAS workers spent about one-half of the year in SAS work.

WILLINGNESS TO DO SAS WORK

Almost three-quarters (74%) of the SAS work force would do more SAS work during the year, were it available. Most (72%) SAS workers plan to continue in SAS work for at least five years, providing that they remain physically able. Twelve percent expect to leave field work within one year; 10% expect to leave within three years; and 6% expect to leave within five years.

Forty percent of SAS workers who say they expect to leave SAS work within one year cite dissatisfaction with the terms of employment as their reason for wanting to leave. Twenty-one percent are dissatisfied with the working conditions, 12% are dissatisfied with the pay, and 7% are dissatisfied with the benefits. An additional 34% of SAS workers expect to leave SAS work within one year because they wish to do some other kind of work. Another 9% expect to leave because they dislike the seasonal nature of the work. The remaining 17% have other reasons for wanting to leave SAS work.

Of SAS workers desiring to leave SAS work within one year, 20% would seek employment in construction. Manufacturing work is the choice of 13% of SAS laborers who want to leave within a year; maintenance and mechanical work is preferred by 12%; and clerical, health or professional work is preferred by 13%.

TRANSPORTATION TO WORK

Transportation to work is an important issue since fewer than one-half of SAS workers own a car. Twelve percent of SAS workers are charged by their employers for rides. Five times more workers employed by farm labor contractors (30%) report this practice than workers employed by growers (6%).

Driving is the most popular means of getting to work for those who have access to a vehicle. However, more workers say they drive to work (45%) than own a vehicle (42%), implying that some workers drive vehicles of friends or relatives.

Over one-half (55%) of SAS workers do not drive a car or truck to work. One-third (33%) ride with others, 11% ride a labor bus, 8% walk, and the remaining 3% take other forms of transportation.

MIGRATION AND LABOR AVAILABILITY

Most (58%) SAS workers say they are not willing to travel more than commuting distance from home to secure work. However, a sizable minority (41%) say they would be willing to travel in search of work. This consists of 2% of SAS workers willing to stay away from home overnight; another 15% willing to relocate temporarily; and another 24% willing to move permanently.

IMPORTANCE OF WAGES AND WORKING CONDITIONS TO LABOR SUPPLY

SAS workers were asked to indicate whether various factors were very important, somewhat important, or not important to their willingness to continue doing SAS work.

Most (82%) SAS workers consider higher wages very important. Those working for contractors consider them very important more often than those who work directly for growers (95% vs. 79%).

Good employer relations are very important to 79% of SAS workers. Ninety-three percent of those working for contractors find this issue very important, compared to 76% of those hired directly.

Seventy-nine percent of SAS workers regard improved benefits as very important. Ninety percent of those working for farm labor contractors consider this issue very important, compared to 68% of those who work directly for the grower.

Seventy-two percent of SAS workers consider employer commitment to a certain minimum amount of work very important. Ninety-two percent of those working for farm labor contractors find this issue very important while 71% of those hired directly find it very important.

Fifty-seven percent of SAS workers regard better job information as very important. Those working for farm labor contractors consider it very important more often (84%) than those who work directly for growers (51%).

In addition, the majority of SAS workers report that free or low cost housing, paid transportation to work, child care and employer provided meals are somewhat important.

CHAPTER 7
SAS EMPLOYMENT

INTRODUCTION

This chapter reports information on the characteristics of SAS jobs. It covers crop, task, wages, hours per week, benefits, and working conditions.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

- Almost one-half (49%) of SAS workers perform harvest work.
- Three-quarters (75%) of SAS workers work in fruits, nuts or vegetables.
- More than three-quarters (77%) of SAS workers are employed directly by producers or packing houses.
- SAS laborers work an average of 37 hours per week, are usually (71%) paid by the hour and most often (51%) earn $4.85 or less per hour.
- SAS workers are usually not covered by Unemployment Insurance (53%), Worker's Compensation (59%), or health insurance (79%).
- Almost one-quarter (24%) of SAS workers do not have access to water for washing at the work site. Twelve percent do not have access to drinking water and twelve percent do not have access to toilets.

CROP

Three-quarters (75%) of SAS laborers work in fruits, nuts or vegetables. Smaller numbers of SAS workers are found in horticulture (15%), field crops (7%) and other crops (3%).

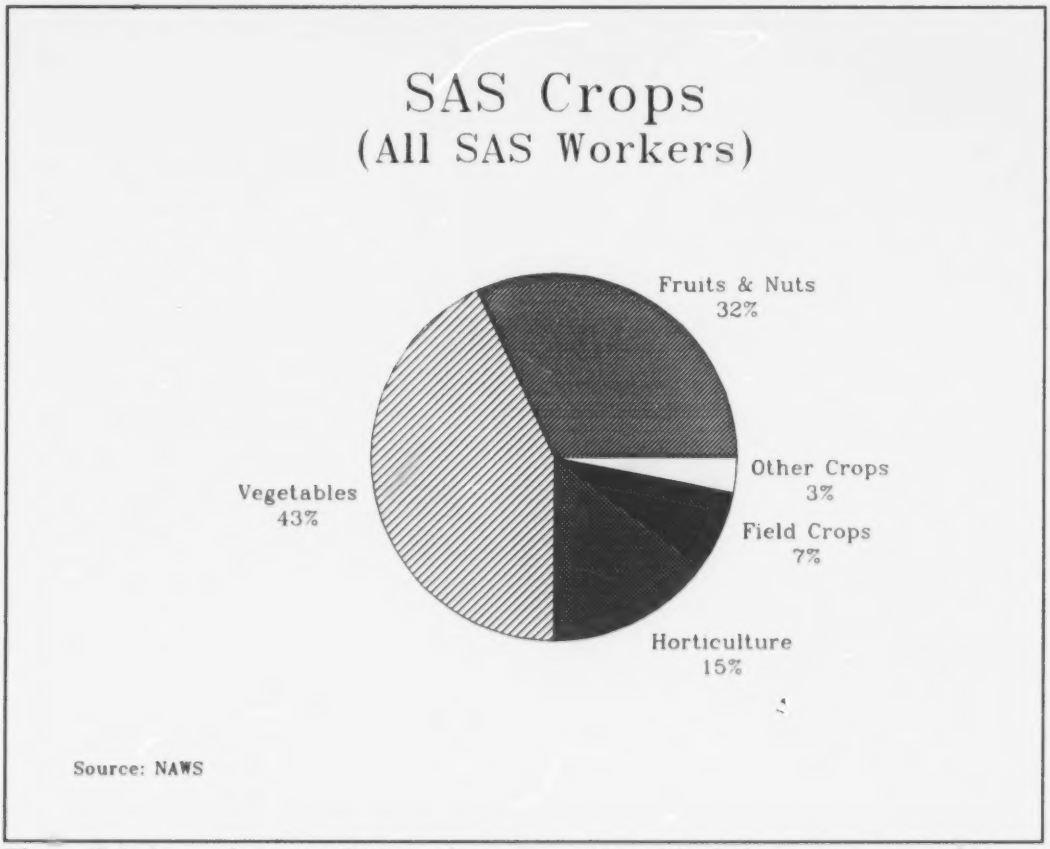


Figure 7.1 shows that most SAS workers are employed in fruits, nuts or vegetables.

TASK

Almost one-half (49%) of the SAS workers harvest crops. Another 19% perform semi-skilled tasks such as irrigating, operating machinery, or pruning. Smaller numbers are found in pre-harvest tasks (15%) such as hoeing, thinning, and transplanting; in post-

harvest tasks (15%) such as field packing, sorting or grading; supervising (1%); and other tasks (1%).

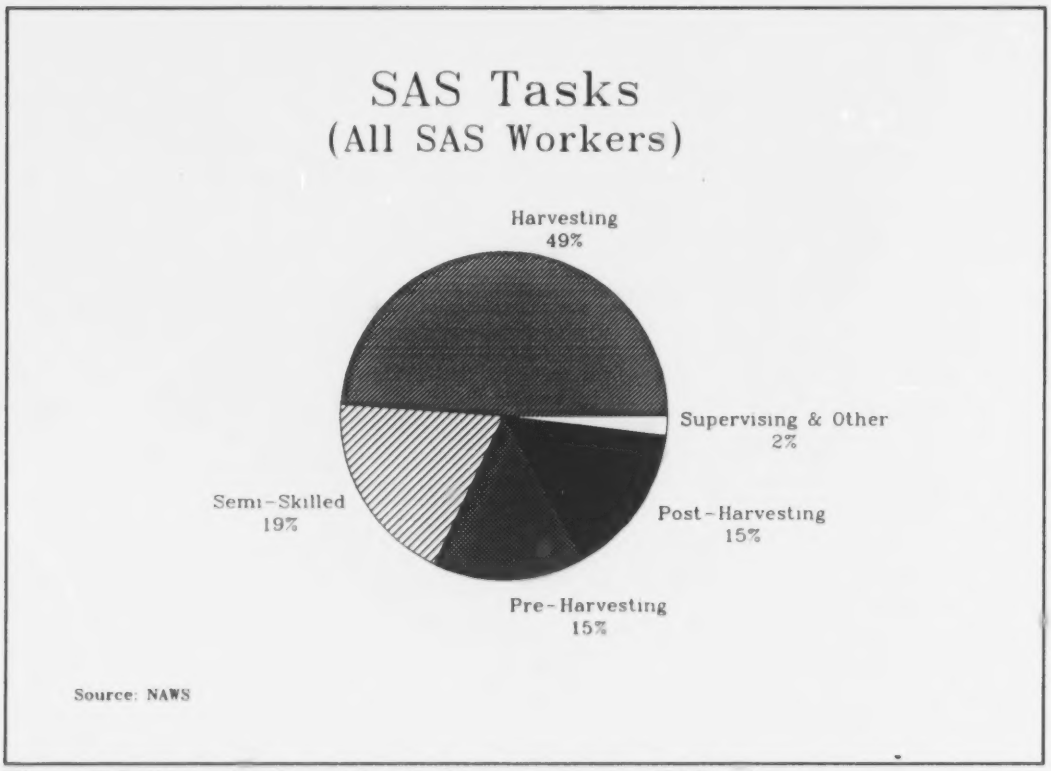


Figure 7.2 shows that harvesting is the most common SAS task.

TYPE OF EMPLOYER

More than three-quarters (77%) of SAS workers are hired directly either by growers (73%), or packing operations or other employers who hire directly (4%). Farm labor contractors hire 23% of SAS workers.

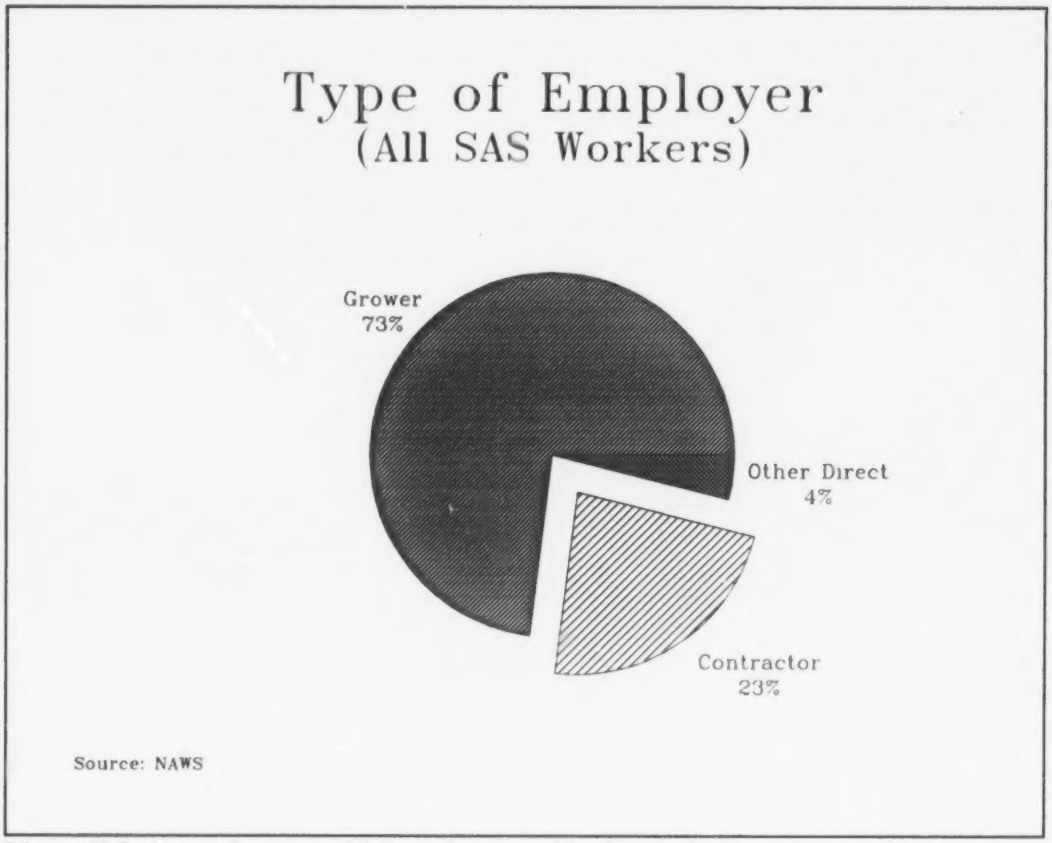


Figure 7.3 shows that most SAS workers are hired directly.

RECRUITMENT

Formal recruiting methods account for the employment of only 14% of SAS workers. Most SAS workers secure employment through their own efforts. Over one-half (53%) of SAS workers found their SAS jobs through referrals from friends or relatives. Another 25% of SAS workers applied for work on their own.

Only 1% of SAS workers are referred by the U.S. Employment Service, and less than 1% are referred as a result of union hiring agreements.

Employers play a more active role in retaining workers than they do in initial recruitment. While only 14% of SAS workers are actively recruited by their employers, 42% report that their employers have a worker retention program. Confining responses to the 64% of SAS workers who are regularly laid off at the end of the season, 66% are employed by growers with active worker retention programs.

Among workers who are regularly laid off at the end of the season, the typical means of encouraging worker retention include talking with the workers at the end of each season (17%); writing to the worker (5%); telephoning the worker (33%); and having someone else contact the worker (16%). Some growers employ more than one method.

WAGES

Often SAS workers perform more than one task for the same employer. Accordingly, information on wages and method of payment was collected on the most important task the worker was engaged in during the week prior to the interview. The median wage for this is $4.85/hour.

Those who work with fruits and nuts have a higher median wage ($5.25/hr) than those who work with other crops ($4.40/hr).

SAS workers are paid in one of three ways: by the hour, by the piece (in which pay is directly related to productivity), or in some combination of the two. Seventy-one percent of SAS workers are paid by the hour, 28% by the piece and 1% in some combination. Different types of workers are paid in different ways. Fifty-five percent of harvesters are paid by the piece compared to 11% of post-harvest workers, 6% of pre-harvest workers and 6% of semi-skilled laborers. Similarly, work in some crops is more likely to be paid by the piece. Over one-third of SAS workers in fruits and nuts, and vegetables (37% and 35%, respectively) are paid by the piece. Horticulture workers (9%) and field crop

workers (1%) rarely are paid by the piece. Workers hired by farm labor contractors are more likely to be paid by the piece (37%) than those hired by growers (25%).

Piece rate workers are less likely to receive benefits than workers paid by the hour. Forty-nine percent of workers who are paid by the hour report that they are covered by Worker's Compensation compared to 24% of those paid by the piece. Similarly, workers paid by the hour are more likely to be covered by Unemployment Insurance (56%) than workers who are paid by the piece (41%).

Undocumented workers more often are paid by the piece (45%) than documented workers (33%). Of all the legal statuses, American citizens are the least likely to be paid by the piece (12%).

HOURS

A week of SAS work is, on the average, thirty-seven hours long.

BONUSES

Paying cash bonuses does not appear to be standard procedure for either farm labor contractors or agricultural producers. Bonuses are given to one-fourth (25%) of SAS workers. Of workers who receive bonuses, 4% receive bonuses dependent on grower profit; 39% receive end-of-season bonuses; 15% receive incentive bonuses; 33% receive holiday bonuses; and 11% receive other types of bonuses. Some SAS workers receive more than one type of bonus.

BENEFITS

The NAWS asked SAS workers what benefits they were aware of receiving at their job. In some cases, SAS workers are entitled to benefits (particularly state mandated benefits) of which they may not be conscious and, therefore, are unlikely to claim.

Forty-seven percent of SAS workers report being covered by Unemployment Insurance. Forty-one percent of workers hired by farm labor contractors and 49% percent of those workers hired directly are covered by Unemployment Insurance.

Forty-one percent of SAS workers report being covered by Worker's Compensation. Twenty-seven percent of employees who work for farm labor contractors are covered while 46% of those hired directly are covered.

In addition to state mandated benefits, 21% of SAS workers are covered by off-the-job health insurance. Workers who are hired directly are over four times more likely to receive health insurance than workers hired by farm labor contractors (26% versus 6%). SAS workers receive paid vacations 13% of the time. Growers' employees receive paid vacations more often than farm labor contractors' employees (16% vs. 2%).

Twenty-eight percent of SAS workers live in employer provided housing. Twenty-one percent of SAS workers are furnished with employer-owned housing free of charge. Only 2% of SAS workers are provided free housing for their families, the remaining 5% pay their employers for family housing. In contrast to the pattern for other benefits, employees of farm labor contractors are more likely to live in housing provided by their employer than are workers employed by agricultural producers (40% vs. 24%).

A nominal percentage of SAS workers (2%) receive meals from their employers. Of this, one-half receive free meals and one-half pay their employer for meals. Farm labor contractors and agricultural producers are equally likely to provide meals.

Few (4%) SAS workers receive advances to cover the cost of migration to the job site at the start of the season.

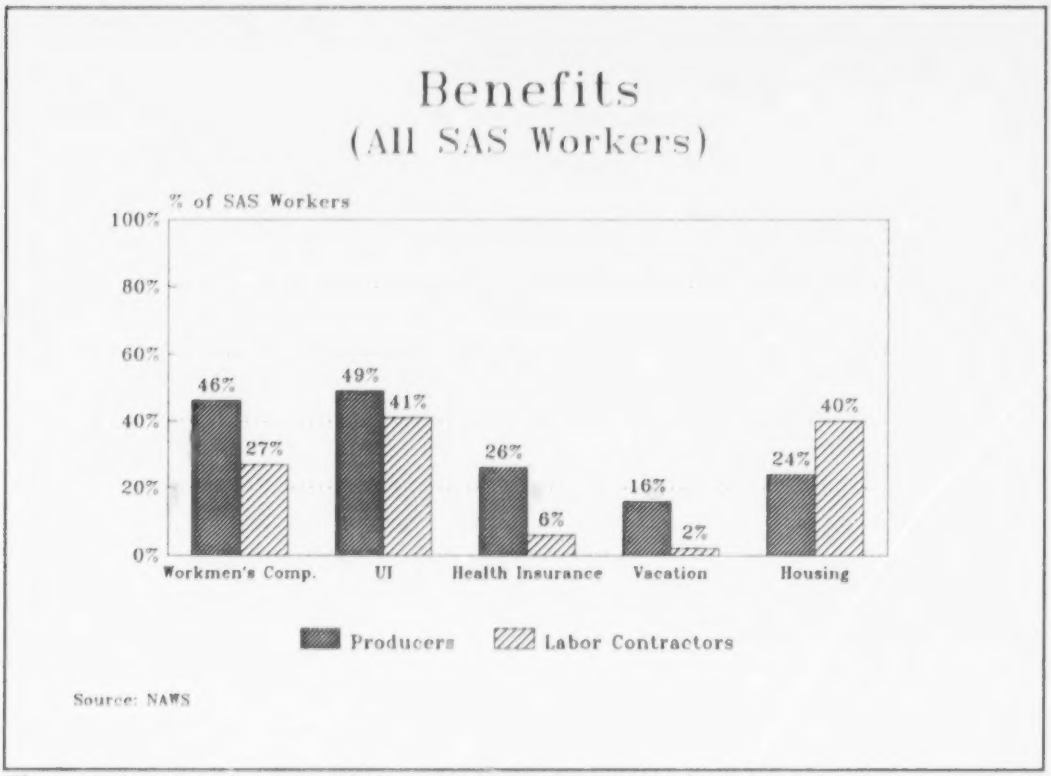


Figure 7.4 shows that most SAS workers do not receive benefits.

EQUIPMENT

Almost all (94%) SAS workers need tools to perform their jobs. Most (69%) SAS workers use employer provided tools. However, 25% of SAS workers must purchase their own tools. SAS workers hired by contractors are more likely to pay for their own tools (43%) than workers who are hired directly (19%).

SANITARY FACILITIES

Even though most workers report that sanitary facilities are available at their work sites, a significant minority of workers still lack access to basic sanitary facilities. Twelve percent of SAS workers have no access to toilets, 12% lack access to drinking water, and 24% lack access to water for washing. Workers employed by contractors and producers are about equally likely to have washing water (74% and 77%, respectively). Those who work for contractors are more likely to be provided with drinking water than those who work for producers (97% vs. 85%), but less likely to have access to toilets (78% vs. 91%, respectively).

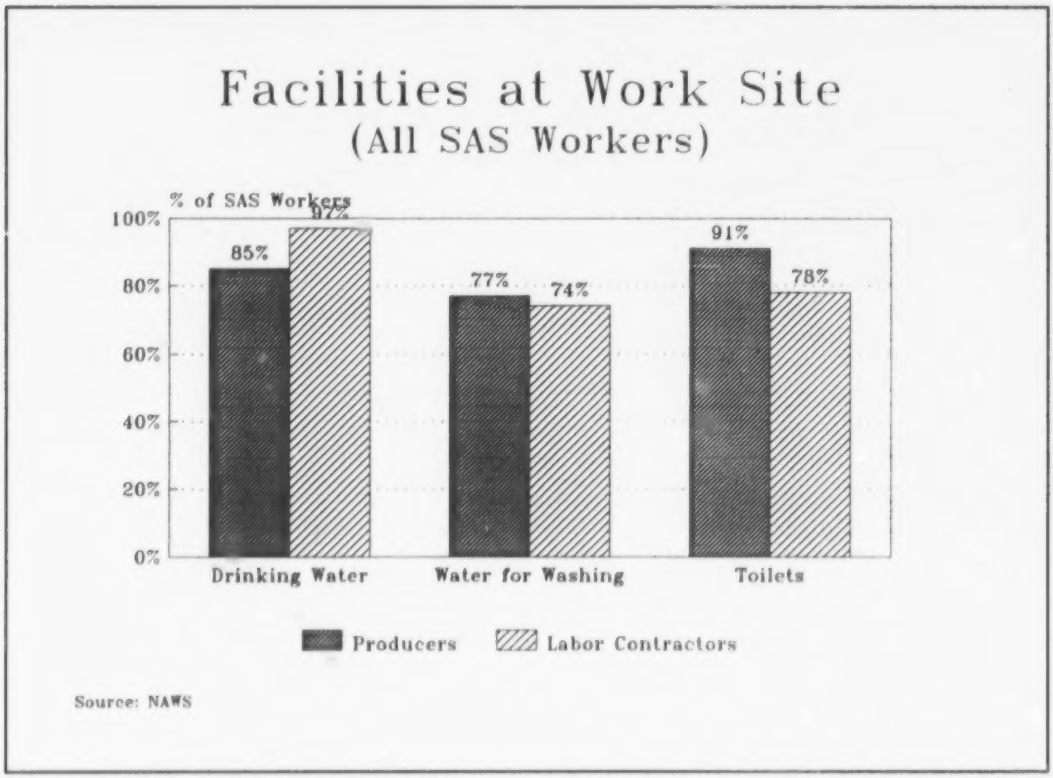


Figure 7.5 shows that sanitary facilities at the work site are not universally available to SAS workers.

CHAPTER 8
NON-SAS EMPLOYMENT

INTRODUCTION

This chapter reviews SAS worker experience in non-SAS work. It covers time spent in non-SAS employment, characteristics of SAS workers who perform non-SAS work, non-SAS wages, areas of non-SAS work and SAS worker attitude toward non-SAS work.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

- The average SAS worker spends between one and two months per year performing non-SAS labor.
- About one in three (36%) SAS workers performs non-SAS labor during a one-year period.
- The majority (61%) of SAS workers who perform non-SAS labor do this for fewer than four months out of the year.
- The median wage SAS workers receive for non-SAS labor is $4.50/hr.
- Most (74%) SAS workers who perform non-SAS work do it in the area of agricultural work, services, construction, mechanics, food service and manufacturing.
- It appears that many SAS workers who perform non-SAS labor prefer it to SAS labor.

- SAS workers who have contacts in the non-farm sector and/or have a history of non-SAS labor are more confident in their ability to get a non-SAS job than those who don't.

FREQUENCY OF NON-SAS EMPLOYMENT: ALL SAS WORKERS

NAWS collects information on non-SAS employment performed in the United States. Any jobs performed abroad are not included in this analysis. On average, SAS workers spend 15% of the year in non-SAS work. About one in three (36%) SAS workers have held a non-SAS job over a one-year period.

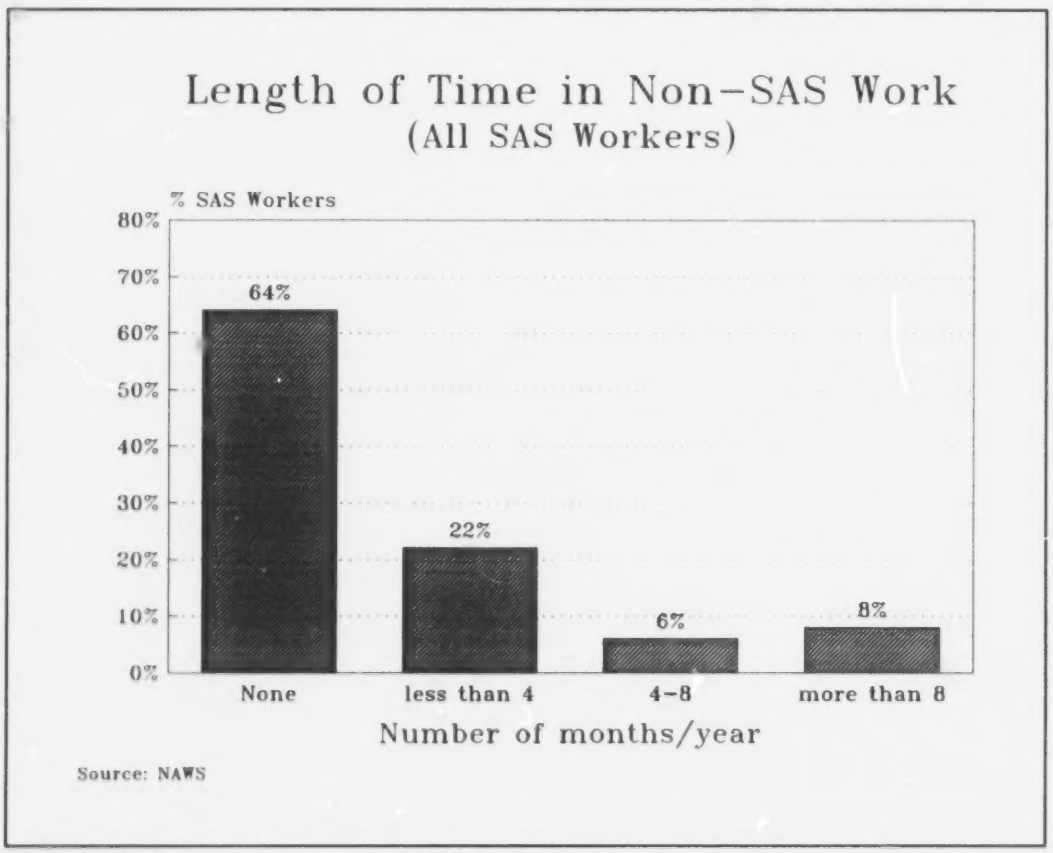


Figure 8.1 shows that most non-SAS jobs last only a few months.

Most workers who take a non-SAS jobs keep it for a few months of the year. Sixty-one percent of those who do non-SAS work, do it for less than four months, or one-third of the year. Only 22% of SAS workers who take non-SAS jobs spend more than two-thirds of the year employed at these jobs.

DESCRIPTION OF NON-SAS EMPLOYMENT

The median wage for all non-SAS employment is $4.50/hr. Those who take non-SAS employment have, on average, only one non-SAS employer a year, and one or two periods of non-SAS work.

The most common area of non-SAS employment is services (26% of non-SAS workers). Agriculture (22%), construction (16%), food service (10%), manufacturing (7%) and the mechanical trades (6%) are other common areas where SAS workers find non-SAS employment.

REASONS FOR NON-SAS EMPLOYMENT

It appears that non-SAS jobs are often perceived as more desirable than SAS jobs. SAS workers don't usually give up a non-SAS job in favor of a SAS job. Fewer than one-quarter (23%) of those who took non-SAS employment said they had left their non-SAS job to take a SAS job. This indicates that most workers do not take non-SAS jobs as a back-up job to tide them over during a slow agricultural season.

Workers see advantages in non-SAS labor as compared to SAS labor. Sixty-four percent of those who took a non-SAS job say they intend to do the same sort of work again. Of those who say they intend to take a non-SAS job again, almost three-quarters (74%) cite advantages of non-SAS work over SAS work as their reason, rather than necessity. The advantages workers who intend to take a non-SAS job again most commonly cite are: general satisfaction (cited by 16% of SAS workers who intend to take a non-SAS job),

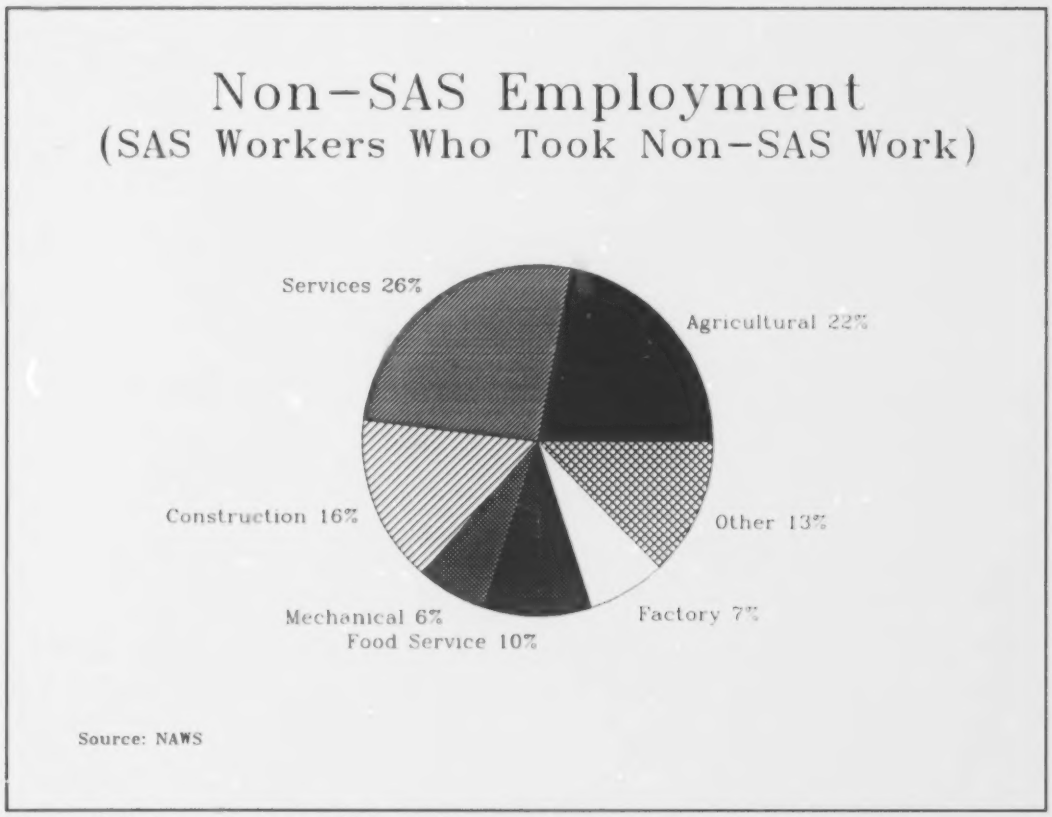


Figure 8.2 shows that non-SAS employment is concentrated in a few sectors.

higher pay (13%), and more stable employment (10%).

Workers most commonly leave non-SAS jobs due to circumstances beyond their immediate control. Over one-third (37%) leave their non-SAS jobs because of employer actions, i.e. they are either laid off or fired. The remaining workers leave due to non-job related factors, such as a move or family responsibilities.

FAMILIARITY WITH NON-SAS WORK

Those with recent employment in a non-SAS sector and those with contacts in non-SAS jobs appear to be more capable of getting a non-SAS job. Eighty-one percent of those who have had a non-SAS job say they could get a non-SAS job within one month while

only 52% of those who have not held a non-SAS job report they could get such a job within one month.

Sixty-six percent of SAS workers with contacts in the non-SAS job sector and 46% of those without contacts say they can get a get a non-SAS job within one month.

Those SAS workers without non-SAS job experience in the last year are less likely to have contacts in the non-SAS work sector than those who have held a non-SAS job. Eighty-one percent of those who have held non-SAS jobs in the last year have relatives or close friends in non-SAS jobs in the United States, while about one-half (59%) of those who did not perform non-SAS work have these contacts.

CHARACTERISTICS OF THOSE WHO PERFORM NON-SAS WORK

SAS workers with different legal statuses have different likelihoods of participating in non-SAS work. A large minority of U.S. citizens (42%) and undocumented workers (44%) hold non-SAS jobs during a one year period. Permanent residents, temporary residents and other authorized workers are less likely to perform a non-SAS job (30%, 30% and 26%, respectively).

The likelihood of having performed non-SAS work varies with other demographic factors. Those born in the United States (42%) are more likely to perform non-SAS work than those born abroad (32%).

Poor workers are less likely to hold a non-SAS job than those who are not poor (35% vs. 40%).

CHAPTER 9
NON-WORK PERIODS AND PERIODS SPENT ABROAD

This chapter reports on the time SAS workers spend not working in the United States. It covers the amount of time spent not working while in the United States, and the amount of time spent abroad. Each of these is analyzed for different groups of SAS workers. This chapter also covers the use of unemployment insurance and the causes for leaving the U.S. work force.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

- The vast majority (80%) of SAS workers do not work year-round in the United States.
- More than one-half (58%) of SAS workers spend part of the year residing in the United States without work.
- A large minority (40%) of SAS workers spend some part of the year abroad.
- Almost three-quarters (72%) of SAS workers who reside in the United States while not working do not apply for Unemployment Insurance benefits. Similarly, 98% of those who spend time abroad do not apply for unemployment insurance benefits for that time.
- Most (70%) SAS workers spend less than three months per year residing in the United States while not working, although a significant minority (13%) are without work for six months or more.
- For the majority (72%) of SAS workers who spend time not working while in the United States, lack of work is due to lay offs.
- One-half (50%) of the trips abroad are less than four months long.

- The most frequently given reasons for spending time abroad are visiting relatives (43%) and vacationing (23%).

TIME SPENT NOT WORKING IN THE UNITED STATES: ALL SAS WORKERS

The NAWS collects information on the portion of the year that SAS workers did not participate in the U.S. labor force. The non-U.S. work activities are classified either as periods when the SAS worker is not working but resides in the United States (referred to as "not working while in the United States"), or as periods when the SAS worker leaves the United States (referred to as "time spent abroad"). The sum of these time periods represents the total time spent not working in the United States.

In total, 80% of all SAS workers spend part of the year either not working while in the United States (not employed and residing in the U.S), abroad (whether or not employed), or some combination of the two. Over one-half (58%) of SAS workers spend time not working while residing in the United States during one year. Fewer than one-half (40%) of SAS workers spend part of the year abroad. Eighteen percent do both.

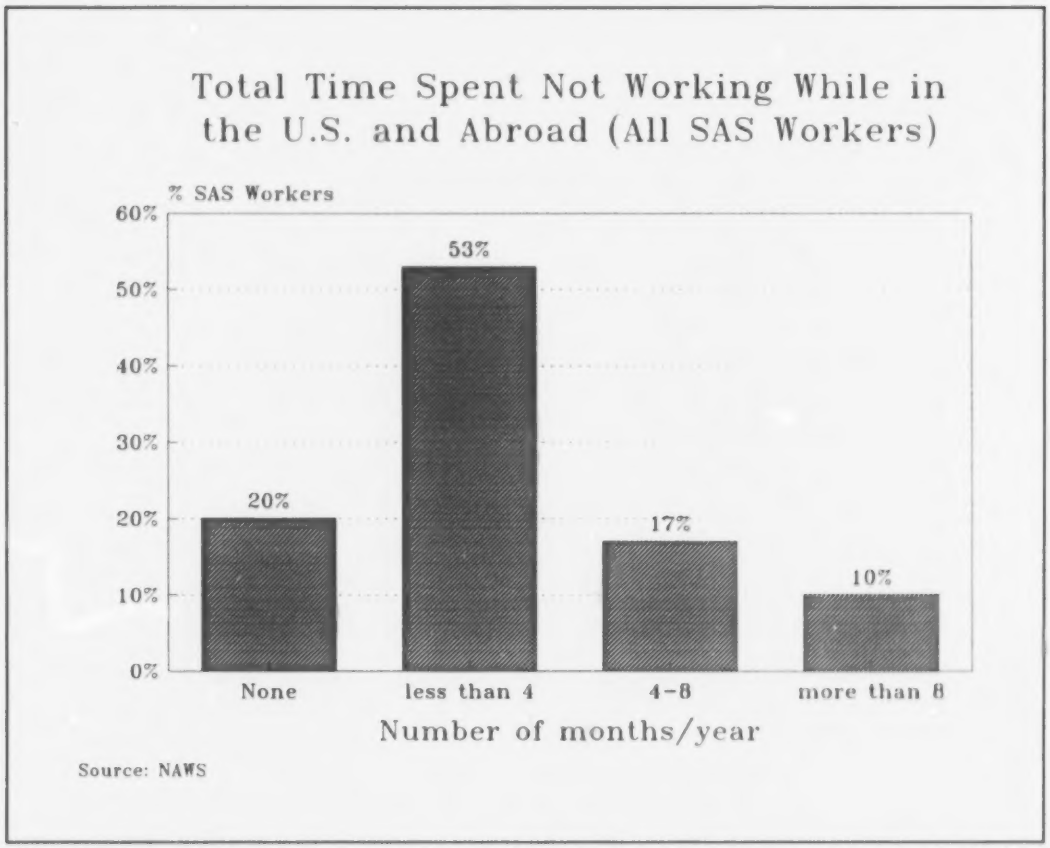


Figure 9.1 shows the total amount of time SAS workers spend not working in the United States and spend abroad.

Below we first analyze information for the entire SAS labor population. However, the incidence of non-work periods varies across groups of individuals.

Most periods that SAS workers spend not working in the United States are not more than a few months long. On average, SAS workers spend roughly four months not working in the United States. This time is divided as follows: about two months not working while in the United States, and about two months abroad, either employed or not employed.

Foreign-born SAS workers spend slightly more time than U.S.-born workers not working per year: 20 weeks vs. 16 weeks. Of the time not working, foreign-born workers spend,

on average, more time abroad than U.S.-born workers (12 weeks vs. 3 weeks), and U.S.-born workers spend more of their non-work time in the United States than foreign-born workers (13 weeks vs. 8 weeks).

Poor SAS workers (those below the poverty level) are out of work more than other SAS workers (23 weeks vs. 12 weeks per year). Women are out of work more frequently than men (23 weeks vs. 17 weeks). Single workers living with their parents spend, on average, more weeks out of work (22 weeks) than parents (18 weeks), married childless workers (18 weeks), and single workers living alone (18 weeks). Those who do not perform non-SAS labor spend more time out of work than those who perform such labor (21 weeks vs. 14 weeks).

TIME SPENT NOT WORKING WHILE IN THE UNITED STATES: SAS WORKERS WITH NON-WORK TIME

USE OF UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFITS

Of the SAS workers who spend some time during the year not working and residing in the United States, few (27%) apply for unemployment benefits. Of those who do not apply, almost one-fourth (24%) say it's because they do not qualify. Another 17% say that they do not know about Unemployment Insurance. Most of the remaining SAS workers who did not apply give no reason for not applying.

Of those who spend time abroad, the vast majority (98%) do not apply for Unemployment Insurance. Almost one-fourth (24%) of those who do not apply say it is because they do not qualify, 21% because they leave the country, 21% because they do not know about Unemployment Insurance, 8% because it is for too short a period of time, and 4% because they know they can find work. The remaining 22% give no reason or have other unspecified reasons.

FREQUENCY AND LENGTH OF TIME

Fifty-eight percent of SAS workers are out of work for some period during the year while in the United States. One-half (50%) of these workers are out of work for less than two months. A significant minority (18%) of SAS workers, however, are out of work for four or more months of the year.

Those who are out of work in the United States part of the year have, on average, one or two such spells lasting a total of two months.

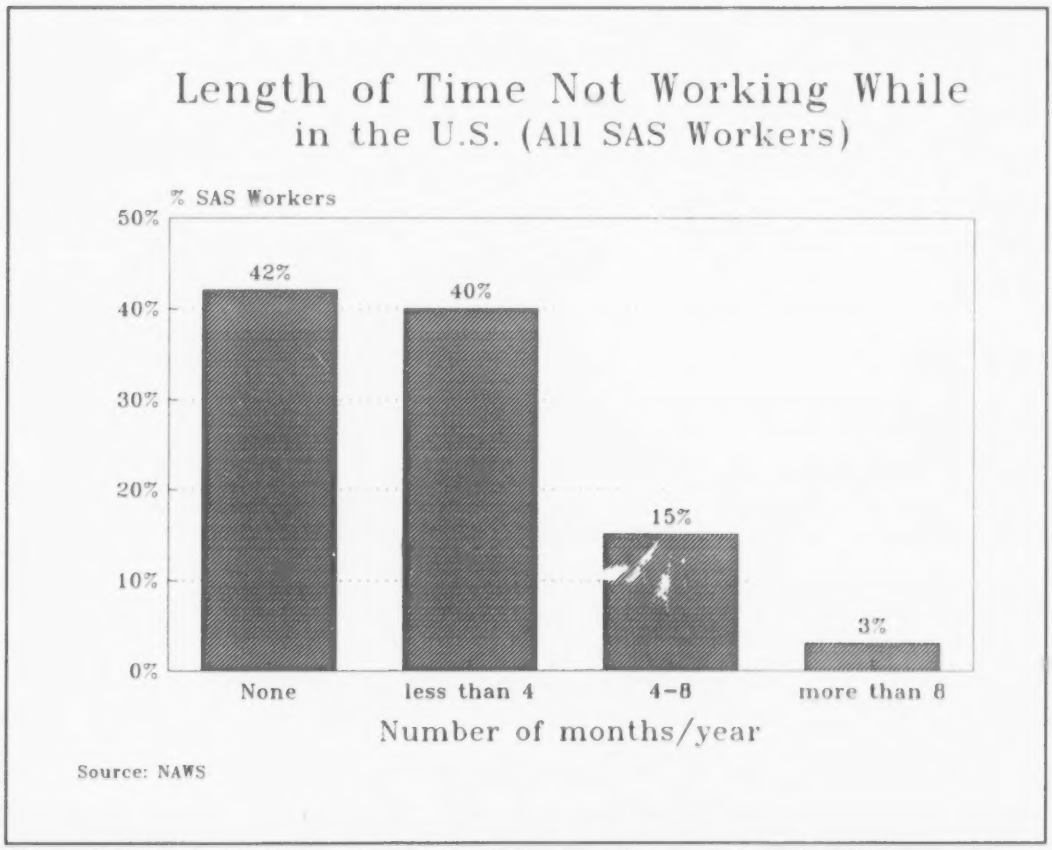


Figure 9.2 illustrates that most periods without work are of short duration.

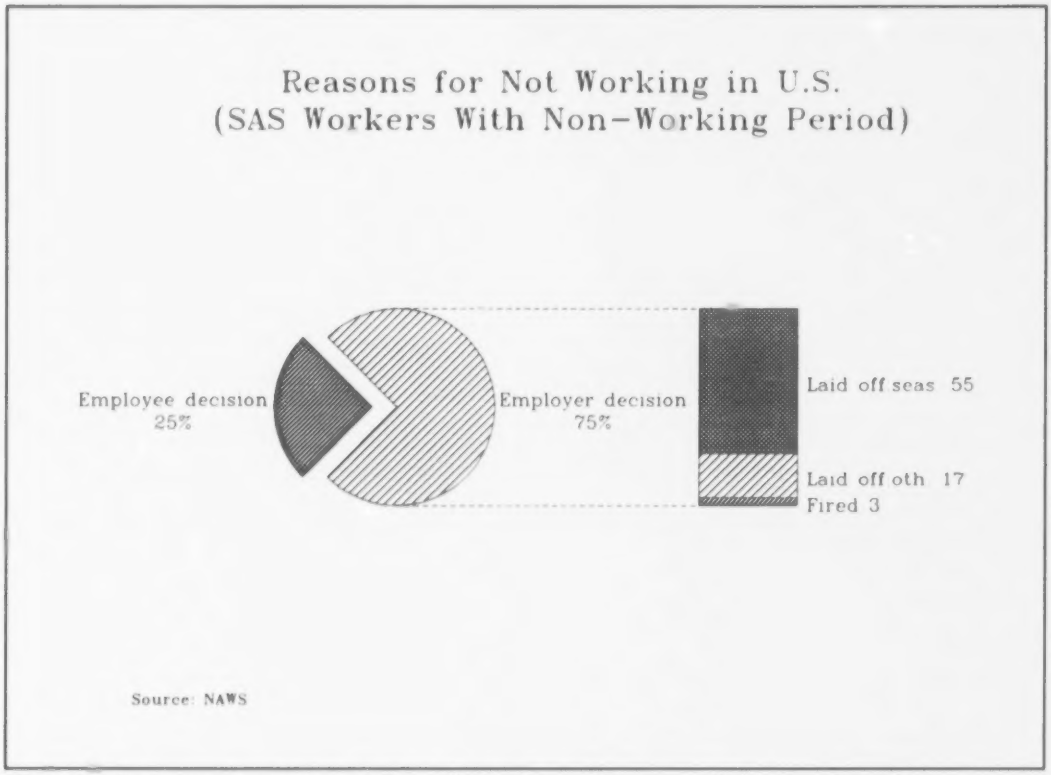


Figure 9.3 shows that seasonal lay offs is the main reason for lack of work.

REASONS FOR LACK OF WORK

One-quarter (25%) of the non-work periods are a result of SAS worker action. Seven percent give up their jobs because they move, 6% because of family responsibilities, 5% because they're going to school, 3% because they take vacation, and 4% because they become ill.

Three-quarters (75%) of the non-work periods are initiated by employers. Over one-half (55%) of non-work periods are a result of the end of the season lay-offs. Seventeen percent are a result of lay-offs due to other events, including poor weather and reduced demand for product. Three percent of non-work periods are a result of firings.

SAS WORKERS WHO SPEND TIME ABROAD

Four out of every ten (40%) SAS workers spend time abroad during the year. Most of those who spend time abroad still reside the bulk of the year in the United States. On average, those who spend time abroad have one stay, and stay for an average of 19 weeks. Of those who spend time abroad, the majority (53%) are there for less than three months.

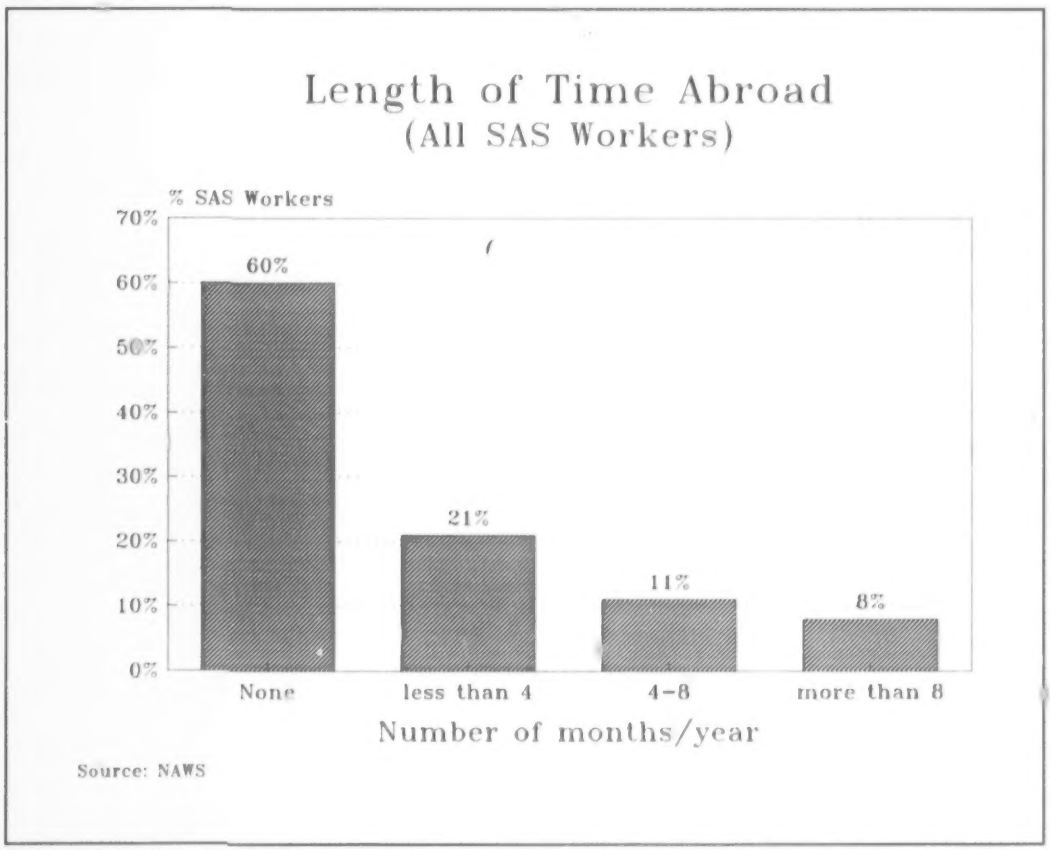


Figure 9.4 shows that SAS workers spend most of their time in the United States.

The most common reasons for leaving the United States are visiting relatives (43%) and vacationing (23%). Only 9% of those who leave the United States do so because they are laid off or fired.

SECTION III: REGIONAL DIFFERENCES IN SAS WORKERS AND SAS WORK

CHAPTER 10
REGIONAL DIFFERENCES IN SAS WORKER CHARACTERISTICS

INTRODUCTION

This chapter reports regional differences in seasonal farm workers' characteristics. It covers differences in demographic characteristics, legal status, family residence and poverty status.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

SAS worker characteristics vary by region.

- The percentage of women in the SAS labor force in the Southeast (15%) is about half that of the rest of the country (33%).

- The Northeast (29%) and the Midwest (29%) have the lowest percentage of foreign-born SAS workers. In the rest of the country, 81% of the SAS workers are foreign-born.

- Minority workers make up more than one-half of the SAS labor force in all regions except the Midwest, where they make up 43% of the SAS labor force. In the Southeast, Northwest and Southwest minorities make up over 90% of the SAS work force.

- The Southeast has the highest proportion (25%) of unauthorized SAS workers. Elsewhere in the country, on average, fewer than 10% of SAS workers are unauthorized.

- The Northeast (59%) and the Southeast (64%) have the SAS labor forces with the highest proportion of workers living away from their families while doing farm work.

- The Southeast (73%) has the highest proportion of poor SAS workers while about one-half (47%) of SAS workers in the rest of the country are poor (below the poverty level).

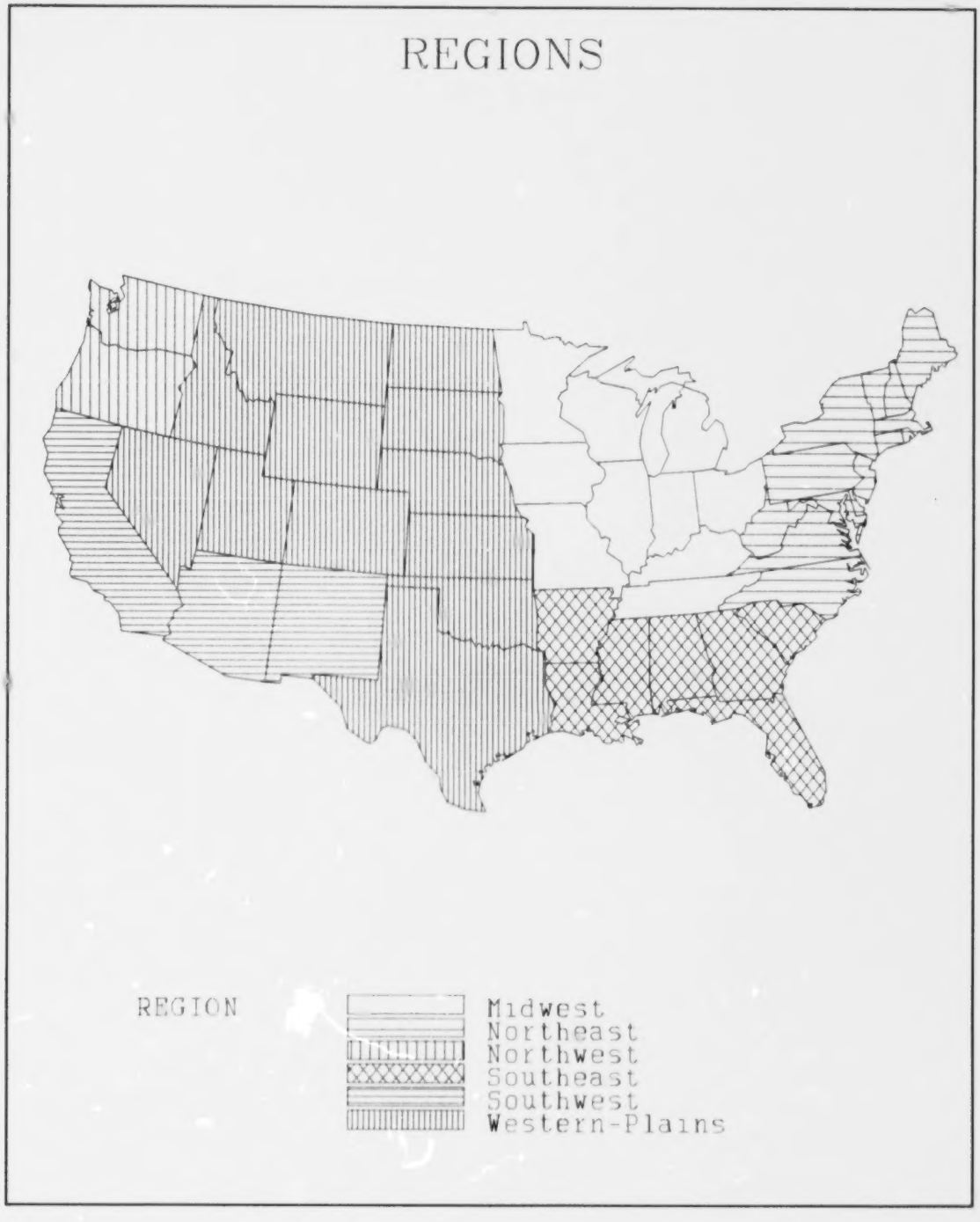
DEFINING THE REGIONS

For the purposes of regional reporting, the NAWS data have been divided into six regions: Northeast, Southeast, Midwest, Western Plains, Pacific Northwest and Southwest. These regions are a modified set of the twelve geographic areas which are used in NAWS sampling. In turn, these twelve areas are derived from seventeen USDA defined agricultural regions. The definitions of each region are contained in Table 10.1 and illustrated in Map 3.

TABLE 10.1 REGIONAL DEFINITIONS

REGION	NAWS STATES	USDA REGIONS
Northeast	Maine, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, West Virginia, North Carolina	Northeast 1 and 2, Appalachia 1
Southeast	Florida, Georgia, Alabama, Louisiana	Florida, Delta, Southeast
Midwest	Iowa, Indiana, Illinois, Michigan, Wisconsin, Kentucky	Lake, Corn Belt 1 and 2
Western Plains	Texas, Oklahoma, Kansas, Colorado, Idaho	Northern Plains, Southern Plains, Mountain 1 and 2
Northwest	Washington, Oregon	Northwest
Southwest	California, Arizona	California and Mountain 3

MAP 3



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The proportion of data that falls in each region is pre-determined as part of the sampling and weighting process. They are based on 1990 USDA information on the number of SAS workers in each region.

The region with the most SAS workers is the Southwest (26%), followed by the Midwest (25%), the Southeast (19%), the Northeast (13%), the Western Plains (7%), and the Northwest (8%).

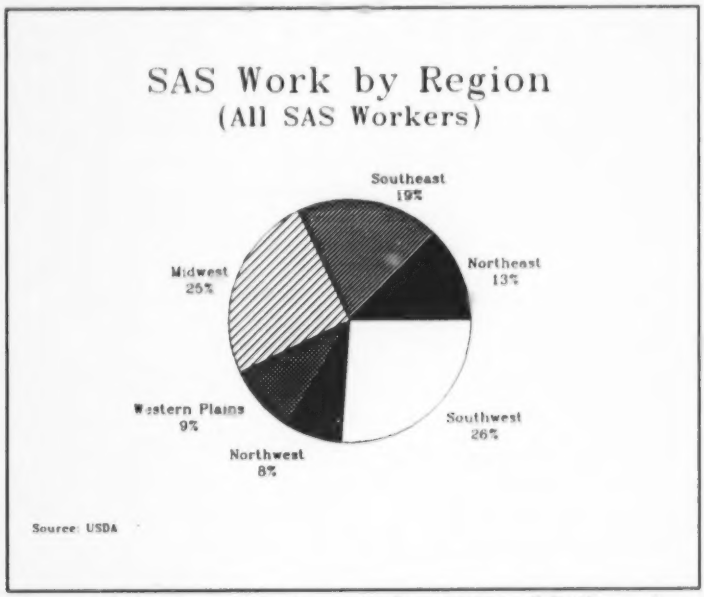

Figure 10.1 shows that the majority (51%) of SAS workers are in the Midwest and Southwest.

GENDER

In most regions women comprise 25% to 35% of the SAS labor force. However, in the Southeast, only 15% of SAS workers are women.

ETHNICITY AND PLACE OF BIRTH

In all regions of the United States, except the Midwest, the majority of SAS workers are foreign-born workers or U.S.-born minority workers. More than one-half (57%) of all Midwestern SAS workers, however, are U.S.-born whites.

The highest concentrations of foreign-born SAS workers are in the Southwest (91%), Southeast (81%), and Pacific Northwest (75%). In contrast, immigrants make up only 29% of Midwestern SAS workers and 29% of Northeastern SAS workers.

LEGAL STATUS

The percentage of unauthorized workers is highest in the Southeast (25%). In the rest of the country, on average, fewer than 10% of SAS workers are without work authorization.

The percent of foreign-born workers who are SAWs is highest in the Northeast, where 79% of the foreign-born workers are SAW applicants. The Midwest has the lowest proportion (17%) of foreign-born workers who are SAWs. Elsewhere, roughly one-half of the foreign workers are SAW applicants: 45% in the Southeast; 42% in the Western Plains; 49% in the Southwest and 64% in the Northwest.

FAMILY RESIDENCE

Whether or not SAS workers are accompanied by their families when performing SAS work varies by region. Western Plains SAS workers are most frequently accompanied by their families (74%). On the other hand, Northeastern and Southeastern SAS workers are the least likely to reside with their families while performing farm labor (40% and 36% respectively). In the Northwest (61%), Midwest (68%) and Southwest (62%), more than one-half of SAS workers reside with their families.

POVERTY

SAS workers in the Southeast (73%) are two and a half times more likely to be poor than SAS workers in the Midwest, who are the least likely (29%) to be poor. Elsewhere in the continental United States, about one-half of the SAS workers are poor: 61% in the Northeast; 51% in the Northwest; 56% in the Southwest and 45% in the Western Plains.

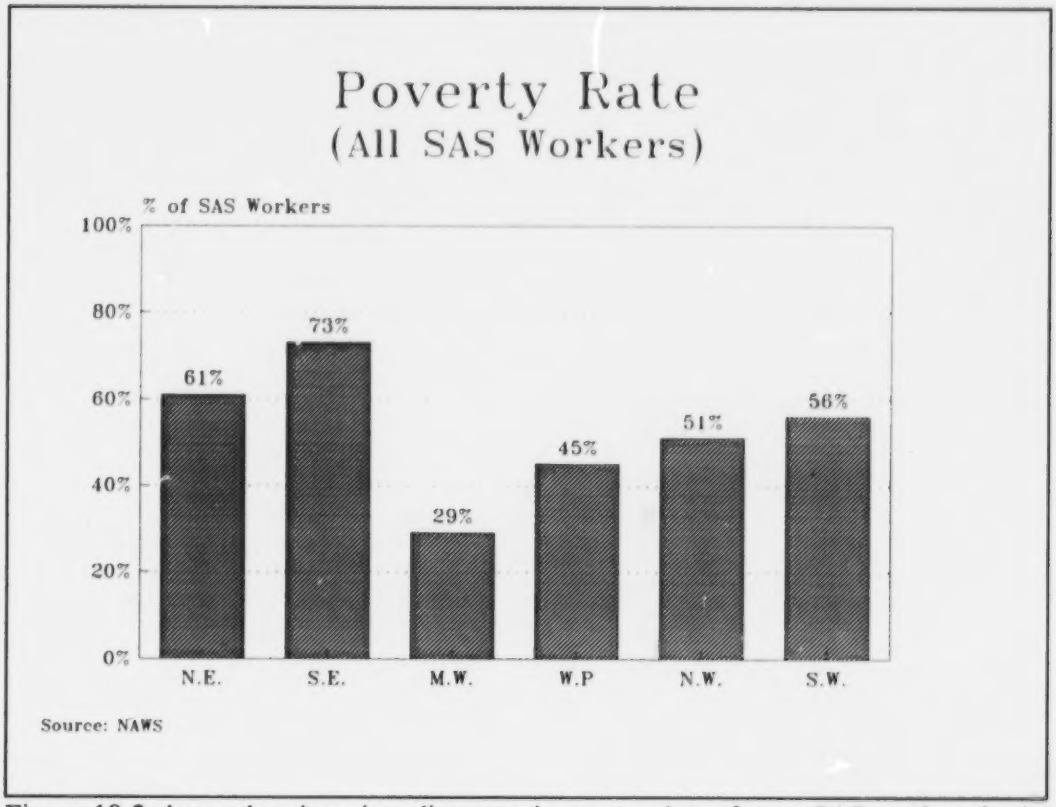

Figure 10.2 shows that there is a disproportionate number of poor SAS workers in the Southeast and disproportionately few in the Midwest.

CHAPTER 11
REGIONAL DIFFERENCES IN SAS JOBS

INTRODUCTION

This chapter covers regional variations in job characteristics. It covers crop, task, patterns of employment, type of SAS employer and benefits.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

SAS work varies across regions:

- The highest percentages of field crop SAS workers are in the Midwest (11%) and Western Plains (12%).
- SAS workers in fruits and nuts are most common in the Northwest (67%), Southwest (60%) and Northeast (57%).
- SAS workers in vegetables are most common (76%) in the Southeast.
- The Southeast has the highest percentage (78%) of hand-harvesting SAS jobs and the lowest percentage (6%) of semi-skilled jobs.
- SAS workers in the Southwest and Southeast spend, on average, less time in non-SAS work than those in the rest of the country.
- SAS workers from the Midwest and the Western Plains spend, on average, less time abroad than those in other regions.

- Southeastern SAS workers spend, on average, less time not working while in the United States than those in other regions.

- The highest concentration of SAS workers employed by farm labor contractors is in the Southeast (64%).

- According to respondents, SAS employers in the Southeast rarely offer workers' compensation (15%) or Unemployment Insurance (16%).

CROP

The proportion of SAS workers employed in different crops varies across regions. The Midwest and Western Plains have the highest percentage of SAS workers in field crops (11% and 12%, respectively). The other regions have, on average, 4% of their SAS labor force in field crops. The Midwest and Western Plains also have the smallest percentages of workers in fruit and nut production (2% and 8%, respectively, compared to 38% in the rest of the country).

The Northwest, Southwest and Northeast have high percentages of fruit and nut SAS workers: 67% in the Northwest, 60% in the Southwest, and 57% in the Northeast. This compares to 16% in the rest of the country.

The Southeast has the highest percentage of SAS workers in vegetables (76% vs. 34% in the rest of the country).

TASK

With the exception of the Southeast, the breakdown of tasks in all regions is similar. The Southeast has the highest proportion of SAS workers involved in hand-harvesting (71% vs. 42% in the rest of the country), and the lowest proportion of workers doing semi-skilled tasks (6% vs. 21% in the rest of the country).

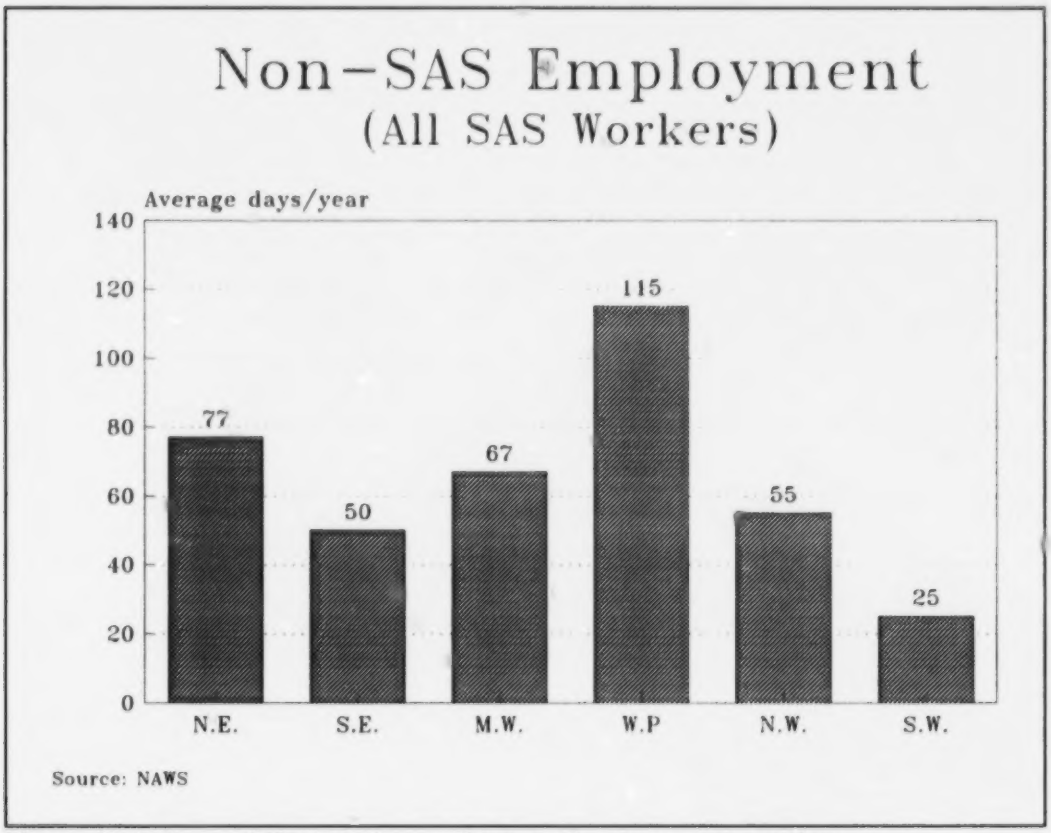

Figure 11.1 shows differences in non-SAS employment across regions.

EMPLOYMENT PATTERNS

The amount of time SAS workers, on average, dedicate to non-SAS employment varies by region. Southwestern and Southeastern SAS workers spend less time in non-SAS jobs (an average of 25 and 50 days per year, respectively) than those in other regions. A SAS

worker in the Western Plains does an average of 115 days of non-SAS employment a year, a SAS worker in the Northeast an average of 77 days, a SAS worker in the Midwest an average of 67 days, and a SAS worker in the Northwest an average of 55 days.

SAS workers in the Midwest and the Western Plains spend, on average, fewer days (40 and 20, respectively) per year abroad than those in other regions. On average, 66 days of the year are spent abroad for Northeastern SAS workers, 118 for Southeastern SAS workers, 50 for Northwestern SAS workers, and 55 for Southwestern SAS workers. On average, Southeastern SAS workers spend less time (25 days per year) not working while in the United States than those in other regions. A SAS worker in the Western Plains spends an average of 63 days not working while in the United States, a SAS worker in the Northeast spends 70 days, a SAS worker in the Northwest spends 78 days, a SAS worker in the Southwest spends 85 days, and a SAS worker in the Midwest spends 89 days.

TYPE OF EMPLOYER

SAS workers employed by farm labor contractors are concentrated in a few regions. Farm labor contractors are the most common SAS employers in the Southeast, where 64% of SAS laborers work for them. In the Southwest, 34% of SAS workers are employed by farm labor contractors, as are 7% of SAS workers in the Western Plains. Fewer than 5% of workers in any of the other three regions work for farm labor contractors.

BENEFITS

Employers in the Southeast appear to offer the least benefits to SAS workers. Only 15% of the SAS workers say that they are covered by workers compensation. In other regions, coverage is provided to between 35% and 58% of the workers. Similarly, in the Southeast, 16% of SAS workers are covered by Unemployment Insurance. In the Midwest 26% of SAS workers have unemployment insurance. In the other regions, between 49% and 85% of the SAS workers have Unemployment Insurance.

APPENDIX: STATISTICAL PROCEDURES

BACKGROUND

In order to make the findings of this report accessible to a broad range of readers, the discussion of the statistical methodology was reserved for this appendix. This appendix provides information on the statistical conventions observed in this report. Further information on statistical procedures used in reporting NAWS data can be obtained by writing to Rick Mines at the address listed in the introduction.

DETERMINING THE CONFIDENCE INTERVALS

A confidence interval is an estimated range of values with a given high probability of covering the true population value. This section provides the reader with the information necessary to calculate confidence intervals associated with reported figures.

For categorical variables, such as gender, ethnicity, and legal status, we report the proportion or percentage of workers falling into any specific category. In this situation, confidence intervals are based on the normal approximation to the binomial distribution. This method implies that, with a 99% confidence interval, reported figures vary at most four percentage points from the true value. Hence, if 75% of SAS workers are reported to fall into some category, we have 99% confidence that between 71% and 79% of the SAS workers fall in that category.

When reporting on continuous variables such as age, number of years of schooling, or wages, information is usually presented using measures of central tendency such as averages or medians. Confidence intervals for the averages of continuous variables are based on standard errors. Standard errors provide a measure of the variability of the average value in repeated random

samples from the same population. Small standard errors mean that the average would not vary much in repeated samples and large standard errors indicate that the average has greater variance. A 99% confidence interval for any sample average corresponds to roughly three times the standard error. For example, for a variable with a reported average of 31 and a standard error of 1, we are 99% confident that the population average falls between 28 and 34.

Table A.1 contains all the continuous variables in the report. It provides the means for the SAS worker population, the standard errors and the range with 99% probability of covering the true population value.

Table A.1 Confidence Intervals for Continuous Variables

Variable	Average	Standard Error	99% Confidence Interval
Age	32.27	.27	31.46 - 33.03
Highest Grade	7.75	.08	7.51 - 7.99
Hours of Work per Week	36.75	.37	35.64 - 37.86
Number of Children (under 15)	1.31	.04	1.19 - 1.43
Number of Children in Household	.95	.04	.83 - 1.07
Number of Family Household Members	2.72	.04	2.60 - 2.84
Number of SAS Workers in Household	2.70	.06	2.52 - 2.88
Number of Non-SAS Workers in Household	.40	.02	.34 - .46
Number of Non-Family Household Members	.88	.04	.76 - 1.00
Number of People in Household	3.61	.06	3.43 - 3.79
Non-SAS Wage (hourly)	$5.24	$.23	$4.55 - $5.93
SAS Wage (hourly)	$5.19	$.05	$5.04 - $5.34
Weeks per Year Spent Abroad	8.37	.58	6.63 - 10.11
Weeks per Year Spent in Non-SAS Work	8.32	.91	5.59 - 11.05
Weeks per Year Spent Not Working in the United States	9.88	.41	8.65 - 11.11
Weeks per Year Spent in SAS Work	25.48	.37	24.37 - 25.59
Years Doing Full-Time Work	14.00	.25	13.25 - 14.75
Years Doing SAS Work	10.12	.22	9.46 - 10.78
Years with Employer	4.29	.12	3.93 - 4.65
Years in the United States (foreign-born only)	10.26	.18	9.72 - 10.8

DIFFERENCES BETWEEN GROUPS OF SAS WORKERS

All reported differences in averages or proportions for different groups of SAS workers are statistically significant at the $p < .05$ level. Differences between continuous variables, including differences that are reported through medians, were verified using the t-test of means. Relationships among categorical variables were checked using the Pearson Chi-Square test.

It should be noted that the Chi-Square test checks for distributional differences in the value being analyzed among all groups in the test. It should not be assumed that every group is significantly different from every other group.

In order to minimize the complexity of the report, statistical tests that resulted in insignificant differences (at the $p < .05$ level) or that were inconclusive are not mentioned in the text.